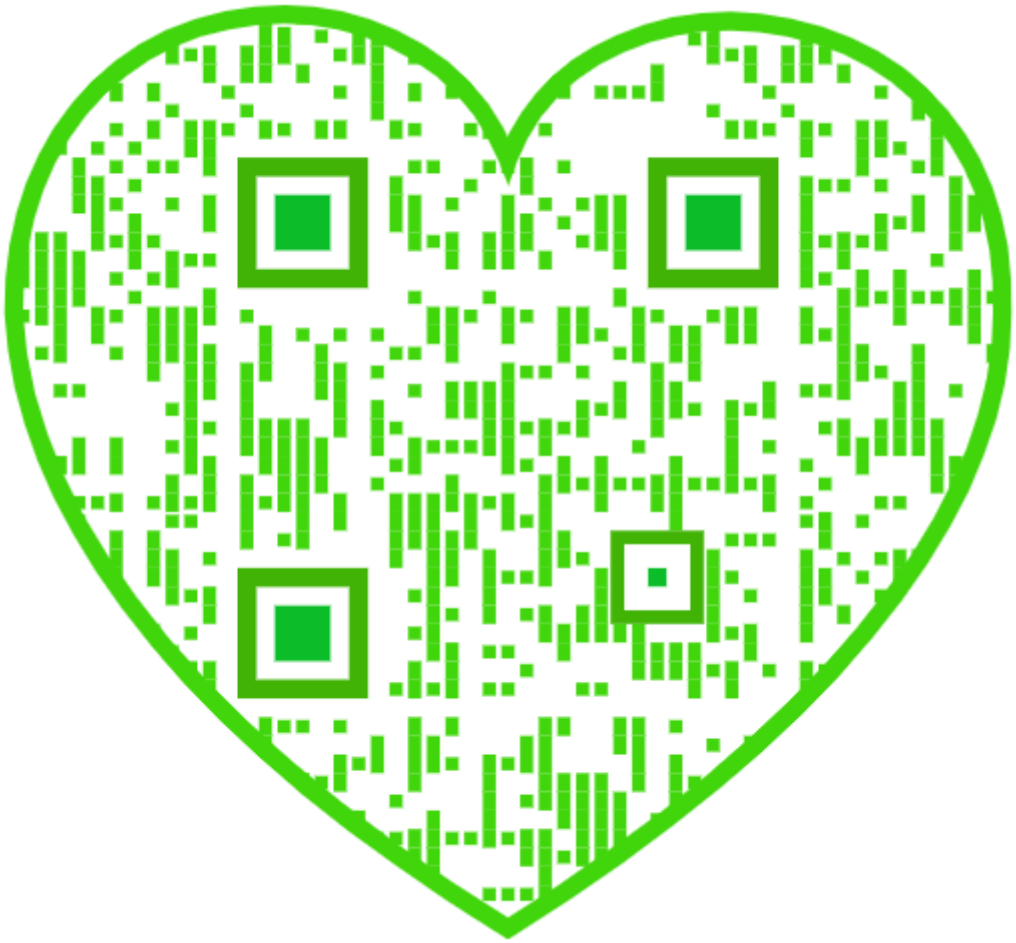

THE BADMINTON MAGAZINE

OF

SPORTS AND PASTIMES

VOL. VI.

THE

BADMINTON MAGAZINE

OF

SPORTS AND PASTIMES

EDITED BY

ALFRED E. T. WATSON

Volume VI.

JANUARY to JUNE 1898

LONGMANS, GREEN, AND CO.
39 PATERNOSTER ROW, LONDON
NEW YORK AND BOMBAY
1898

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THE
BADMINTON MAGAZINE
January 1898

DON QUEBRANTA HUESOS: A TALE OF SOUTHERN SPAIN

BY E. AND H. HERON

THIS story is the story of Red Detching, who says that Brunton, of the Indian Public Works Department, could corroborate it; but as Brunton is road-making somewhere to the north of Gilgit, his version of the adventure is unattainable. All the incidents happened in Spain during a shooting trip undertaken by Brunton, and supervised by Detching in his character of 'passenger'—under which denomination he has accompanied many and varied expeditions, and seen more things than one.

As to locality, Detching is vague. He says that since the events occurred upon a mountain range within sight of two continents, and close to the beat of a picturesquely active but not too efficient police force, an exact record of names is unnecessary, for it will be seen that the place is already focussed by the vigilant eyes of the public and of the law. The trip was undertaken, Detching says, for the purpose of shooting, and his own position may be well illustrated by a slight digression. Once upon a time in September, Detching found himself in a big country-house in the midst of acres of coverts. 'Do you shoot?' asked his host of the little red doctor. 'Oh, yes, I shoot,' replied Detching; 'but I don't know about hitting anything.' So he went as a 'passenger' to Spain, and watched Brunton, who nearly

always hits. Brunton was beset with a desire to shoot ibex with horns thirty inches long; but after a fortnight, spent in arranging one *batida* after another, interspersed with many exhausting days of stalking, had only resulted in the death of a female ibex—shot by mistake when her head was hidden by thorn bushes—Brunton determined to have recourse to the method frequently followed by native hunters, who cut off the ibex in the passes by which they descend to their feeding grounds in the dusk, and return to their haunts of ice and rock at dawn.

Accordingly they left the camp where they had their head-quarters early in the day, accompanied by a *cazador*—whom Brunton insisted on calling a *shikari*—a couple of gun-carriers, and one or two pack-mules. Detching says the adventure began at midday at the moment when they halted for lunch near the lair of a goatherd, whose only shelter was a lentisco shrub. Brunton fraternised with the man, who happened to be a keen sportsman, as are most of his trade in these parts. The goatherd examined the rifles and fowling-pieces with much interest, and later on fell into talk with the gun-carriers, from whom he must have gleaned some information; for, presently, he disappeared while the two Englishmen were bathing in the stream which ran from the gorge above.

By the time they were ready to start again, it became known that the mules had both fallen lame, and there was nothing for it but to stable them under a ledge of rock, and to push on as well as they could, each man with an extra load.

Spain in sun and Spain in shadow are two different lands. Spain in sun is best to look upon, but clouded dreary Spain is best for travelling in the corderillas. That day, however, was mercilessly hot, and though with the evening they found themselves on the colder levels, they were still a good distance from the spot they wished to reach.

They were climbing through a beetling gorge towards a strip of windy blue sky against which a lean thicket trembled. As they reached the summit of the ridge two ravens flapped past, and Brunton threw himself down under an upstanding rock and cursed.

'That means the dark will be upon us in ten minutes,' he said; 'the ravens are always the first to move.'

Gaspar, the *cazador*, suggested camping for a few hours and pushing on when the moon rose above the summits, so as to reach the pass before daybreak.

From their feet a curving spur, covered with brushwood, jutted

out like a black scimitar into the centre of the bare, snow-streaked ravine, which already lay in shadow, for the sun was low. Suddenly Gaspar touched Brunton on the arm, and crouching behind

AS THEY REACHED THE SUMMIT OF THE RIDGE TWO RAVENS FLAPPED PAST

the rock pointed up towards a brake of Spanish gorse, growing on a ledge at the further side of the ravine. Through this a small herd of ibex were feeding, one of them a fine male with horns raking grandly back. The last rays of the sun shone red

upon them as it peered from the west across the distant stretch of sea. Brunton and Gaspar crept away under cover of the brushwood, which ran like bristles along the crest of the spur. Meanwhile Detching and the other men waited in their places and listened. The short dusk closed rapidly during the ten minutes before the shots rang out. Detching peered in the direction of the ibex. For a second he saw a dark body, a tumbling outline of horns and legs, before it disappeared into the gloom of the chasm below.

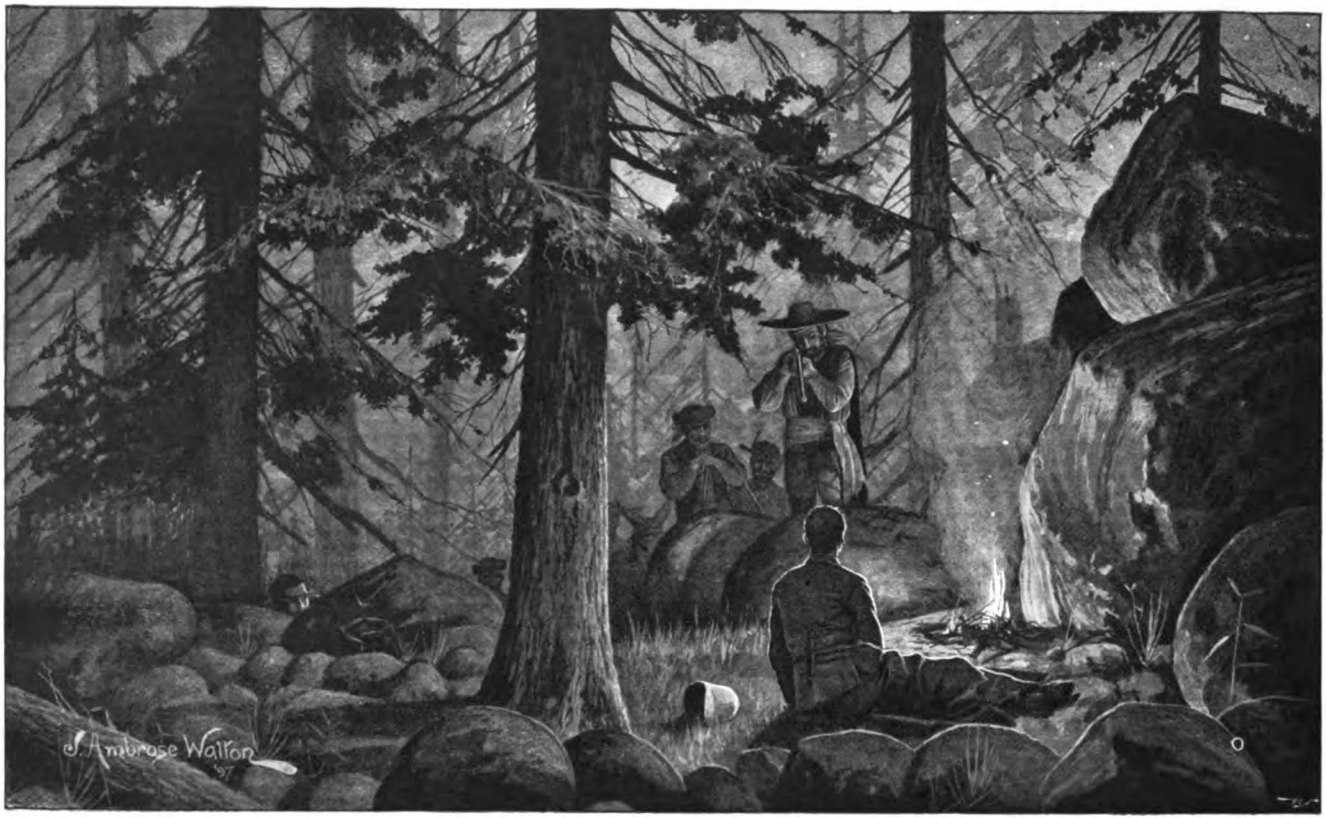
The next moment night was upon them, the limpid, delusive darkness of the Spanish night, and by the time Brunton returned a handful of charcoal was glowing in its appointed place, and the supper well under weigh. Afterwards they wrapped themselves in their saddle-rugs and smoked, staring at the star-powdered sky that seemed close as a roof above them, and listened to the growling talk of the *cazador* and his companions, who sat grouped together lower down the rocky slope.

'The question is should we wait here and try to recover that ibex at daybreak, or push forward during the night,' said Brunton drowsily.

'Can't those carriers retrieve the goat while we go on?' asked Detching. He fancies he dozed while Brunton was pointing out the general idiocy of his proposal. For the next thing he remembers was a kick from Brunton, and an effort on his own part to remember where he was.

Then he saw that Brunton was on his stomach, calling softly for his rifle. And some huge dim forms were moving down the slope towards them; for though the air above was clear enough, nothing could be distinguished on the ground. But the rifle was not brought, and Brunton began to crawl off in the direction of the men. Detching sat still. He says that a masterly inactivity has pulled him through many an awkward pass. He could now count five shapes closing in round them. It seemed as if they must be in the middle of a herd. By an uncontrollable impulse he sneezed. Now Detching's sneeze is a thing apart. It is disproportionate and unexpected like the blast of a foghorn. He had begun to feel annoyed with himself for this ill-timed interruption when he noticed that, contrary to custom, it had produced no effect. The circle continued to draw in. Then the inward meaning of the situation dawned upon him, and he checked a whistle.

'Lord!' sang out the voice of Brunton lower down the hillside; 'they're gees.'



DETCHING SAT UP AND FOUND HIMSELF WINKING AT A GLEAMING GUN-BARREL

As he spoke a tiny streak of flame licked upon the rock-face, caught and flared, and discovered half a dozen men with mules standing round: swarthy, blackbearded fellows, sashed and armed.

Now Spanish brigands are only romantic from a distance, and neither Detching nor Brunton was struck with anything but irritation at the sight of that band of dirty, picturesquely garish men, who rose so suddenly out of the soft southern night.

Detching sat up and found himself winking at a gleaming gun-barrel.

'Damned theatrical,' growled Brunton; 'ask 'em what they want.'

Detching put the question into his best Spanish, being wishful to avoid any misunderstanding.

A burly ruffian stepped forward and replied that they must consider themselves prisoners.

'Whose prisoners?' asked Detching again.

'The prisoners of Don Quebranta Huesos,' said the man with a laugh, which echoed round the circle like dropping shots.

'Rot!' said Brunton, 'that's the local name for those bone-breaking vultures.'

'It also happens to be the name of the brigand chief about whom they were telling some stories last week in the *posada*,' returned Detching.

The robber who acted as spokesman now intimated that it was time to move on, as Don Quebranta was expecting them and did not like to be kept waiting. Resistance being manifestly impossible, Brunton and Detching declared they were ready; the brigands formed up round them, and they began first to march upwards and then in a lateral direction northward, every step taking them deeper into the sombre sierras. Presently the mules were left behind, and the prisoners were allowed to walk together whenever it was possible to walk at all. After climbing and stumbling along steep and thorn-grown ways for miles, they arrived in the early dawn before a dense stretch of thicket, in the cover of which they halted for a few hours' rest.

In reply to a question of Detching's, Vicente, the spokesman, explained that they would reach the retreat of Don Quebranta about nightfall.

'This chief seems a swell in his own way; I wonder what he's like,' said Brunton, as they lay down. 'It's disgusting luck!'

'I hope he will turn out to be of another brand to the kind

that bite their prisoners' noses off by way of reminder to hurry up with the ransom,' Detching remarked.

'I can't collect any ransom,' returned Brunton; 'a man's pay doesn't run to ransoms on any big scale.'

'That's so,' said Detching. 'The end of it will be that we shall be forced to join the band, and tie yellow handkerchiefs round our heads, and live up here in the mountains, until such time as we may be caught by the *guardias civiles*, and all that's left of us taken down to the plains to die.' At which point, before they had time to look any further into the future, they fell asleep, being dog-tired.

In the raw morning darkness they were awakened to recommence their journey upwards through matted undergrowth and scattered patches of pine, beneath which the night still lingered.

Late in the afternoon a halt was called, the men closed in round the prisoners, who were blindfolded and led by the firm grip of dirty brown hands through the scrub; then the wind blew more sharply on their faces, and they knew that they trod on wiry grass, which in turn changed to a surface of bare echoing rock. Passing out of this tunnel, they were secured by having their hands tied, and, when their eyes were uncovered, they found themselves in a small enclosed glade with sheer precipitous sides. The ground was furred with a coarse and hardy grass, but there were thickets of flowering shrubs and a backing of windblown pines, all pictured out by the blaze of torches. The night had fallen, and they perceived the smoulder of a sinking fire, which seemed to burn half way up the cliff. They were led by a winding path towards it. Crouching over the fire, on the little terrace fronting a cave, sat a man wrapped up in a cloak and wearing a wide hat of felt, which entirely shadowed his face. He was very small, and, judging from the hand that rested on his knee, very thin.

At a word from Vicente he rose and bowed, sweeping his hat to his knees, and thus revealing his face. There they saw the narrow wedge of bald head, the hooked nose, the scarlet eyelids —in fact, all the strange and cruel aspect of the *quebranta huesos* paraphrased into a human face.

'To whom have I the pleasure of addressing myself, señores?' he asked with extreme and unexpected politeness.

'Perhaps, as you have forced this interview upon us,' replied Detching, 'you will give us a lead.'

'Certainly, señor. Few men in Spain have not heard of Don Quebranta Huesos.'

In return Detching gave his own name and Brunton's.

'You are travelling for pleasure?' went on the little chief.

'For sport.'

'I trust, señor, that you have no reason to be dissatisfied with the resources of our mountains.'

'None at all,' replied Detching hastily, seeing that Brunton was a very angry man indeed and inclined to speak, 'but we don't find certain other little matters quite so pleasant.'

Don Quebranta raised his yellow birdlike hand in deprecation.

'In this world of change, señor, it is necessary for a man to be equal to all fortunes. I sincerely regret putting you to inconvenience. I hope my men met with your approval—that they conducted your little affair with courtesy. As long as you are my guests, señores, you may command me.'

'You are very good,' began Brunton sourly.

Don Quebranta interposed.

'And now, señores, if you will follow me, we can arrange all that lies between us over a box of cigarettes.'

So saying, he gathered his cloak around him, and preceded them into the cave, which had been made into the semblance of a comfortless room. A smoky lantern upon the table discovered a few chairs, a case of books, and a trestle bed.

Don Quebranta waved them to seats.

'I must apologise for the rudeness of your lodging, but your stay with me will be only just as long as you choose to make it.'

'Then I should choose to go now,' said Brunton.

'But consider, señor. With all my desire to serve you, I must ask two thousand pounds of your English money for a ransom, and even then I shall only bring myself with sorrow to say good-bye to you, my friends, at the head of our little valley. My followers must live—hence the ransom.'

'We are poor men,' replied Detching, 'and are not likely to be able to get together two hundred pounds between us.'

'We of the mountains must live, and I have said two thousand pounds,' returned the little pale man. 'If you, señores, have not so much money, is there not the British Government, which is rich as a fable, and are there not those who love you? Perhaps even a public subscription—who knows?'

'I warn you that you will burn yourself over this affair!' exclaimed Brunton.

The brigand's red eyelids flickered.

'My turn may be coming some day, but not yet!' he answered, with a change of tone; then resuming his suavity, he added:

'Now I will leave you to consider, for this affair must be finished within the week.'

'And the alternative? Suppose we can't raise the amount?' said Detching.

Don Quebranta stopped.

'Alternatives are so often embarrassing, señor. Permit me to withhold the alternative.'

'But we prefer to hear it.'

'The alternative lies with them—I grieve to say it lies with them,' said the brigand with his soft, sorrowful courtesy, pointing to the gaitered figures that flitted backwards and forwards across the glade. 'They are *sequestradores*, who hold to ransom, not pilferers. I can assure you, señores, that I should be heart-broken to have to resort to their customs.'

'Which means that you intend to throw us to your dogs.'

'We have laws—even I cannot break them. And these dogs of mine have long fangs, though they kill slowly.' He stood in the middle of the floor, his cloak falling about him like the be-draggled plumage of a vulture, and from the apex of its folds he thrust forward his white wedge-like head with its thickened blinking eyelids, as he went on: 'A finger on Monday, an ear on Tuesday, on Wednesday—but why continue?' And the little soft-spoken, fierce-hearted gentleman drew his cloak round him and walked tenderly out of their presence into the gloom.

Brunton sat down beside Detching.

'Do you know, I think the little brute's in earnest,' he said.

'That's just it. He's very much in earnest.'

'He said the inside of a week. We might get something done in course of time, but these beggars are impatient it seems.'

'And their customs are beastly.'

'How did it go? A finger on Monday——'

'Oh, dry up!' said Detching; 'I wonder now what we should do.'

'I could fall upon him and break his weasel-neck for him, suggested Brunton. 'Don't say a word—I'd like it!'

'I'm afraid that would not meet all the difficulties of our case. Your plan is just a little too simple.'

Whereupon they both laughed, but that kind of laughter is only skin-deep.

Like many other pleasures, the profession of *sequestrador*, or brigand who holds to ransom, is good while it lasts. The chief is a local god, and enjoys a wide popularity. The brigand, who respects himself and knows his business, gives with the one hand

while he robs with the other. He handsomely subsidises the poor all along the line of his depredations, thus securing spies as well as adherents. And for so long as the carbineers fail to lay him by the heels he rules, a two-faced Janus, with generosity written on the one face and relentlessness on the other.

The less pleasant of these two aspects was turned upon the Englishmen, who were helpless in the delicate hands of Don Quebranta Huesos, with death—to be dealt out in ghastly oddments—awaiting them at the end of their eight days' captivity. Their one hope rested on the possibly adroit and felicitous action of the stout gentleman who represented H.B.M. in the little white town by the shore under the mountains. So they concocted an urgent letter to the Consul, written in pencil on the back of an envelope.

'Ingham will move slowly,' remarked Detching, as they read over the appeal. 'It's his way. And meanwhile this scoundrel will keep sending him bits of us to hurry him up with the coin. I wish I'd stayed at home.' Brunton looked long out into the darkness without answering, until the figure of Don Quebranta reappeared in the arch of the cave.

For three days they lived in golden sunshine, and on the fourth morning a lean-limbed mule-boy, travelling through the sierras, brought an official letter, which made it known that Ingham had wired for instructions. Also that he had applied to the Spanish executive, who were prepared to take action by sending a troop of carbineers into the mountains to search for the brigands. This help Ingham had for the present declined for manifest reasons.

Detching told the little chief how matters stood.

'Ah! I know Señor Ingham. I have had transactions with him before to-day, though indeed it may have been under another name. He haggles like a hen-wife at a fair. It is not well to bargain with the men of my race when the knife is loose in the belt. He will make an offer by-and-bye, and I shall know how to answer him,' was Don Quebranta's significant remark.

Then he turned his inflamed eyes in a scrutinising look upon Brunton, who afterwards told Detching that he seldom felt worse in his life than during those few seconds, when he knew the bandit was choosing which slice he should take first.

Brunton had met all Don Quebranta's show of civility with a rigid and unconcealed contempt. And it was evident that when the chief deemed it necessary to take the alternative measures hinted at, Brunton would be the man to suffer.

The situation was becoming awkward, and Detching felt the moment had come to put into effect a notion from which he hoped something. He presently signed to Brunton to leave him with the chief.

Don Quebranta watched the stalwart figure of the young man as he lounged down the winding path, and said:

THE BRIGAND SHIVERED AND THRUST HIS HAT OVER HIS BROWS

'The Señor is a strong man, but his ears are peculiarly small. Has he the pleasure of Señor Ingham's acquaintance?'

'Knows him well,' replied Detching.

'Then, perhaps, Señor Ingham might recognise one of those ears if he saw it?' asked the chief urbanely.

'Don Quebranta Huesos may have many captives in the

future, but before very long he will not know whether their ears be large or small—or if they have ears at all—unless he is told,' observed Detching.

The little brigand shivered and thrust his hat over his brows.

'If this should ever be so, then my children will tell me,' he replied, with a slight gesture towards his men, some of whom were cooking their evening meal in sight of the cave.

'Within no long time the mountains will grow dim to you and fade away by degrees,' went on Detching. 'When the snows come night will indeed be black, but the day will also be brown; and when the winter falls again, all will be black for ever.'

'Before the day grows black for me I shall be white for ever!' exclaimed the chief.

'But the end may come before you desire it,' said Detching, watching Don Quebranta, whose thin fingers played nervously with his knife-hilt. 'The children of the sierras love not a blind father. And there is a heavy blood-money waiting for the traitor who would sell his chief.' As he finished Don Quebranta's long knife flew through the air with a hiss and hung quivering in the back of the chair from which Detching had sprung.

'The devil is in your tongue,' cried Don Quebranta, still feeling about for another weapon. 'He who utters ill-fortune, compels ill-fortune.'

'Señor, listen. You are a man of birth and education, one who knows what science can do. Suppose I could help you?'

The chief dropped back into his chair.

'I have watched your hands and said, "This is an artist, his fingers are quick and skilful." Now I understand why—it is because you are a doctor. But you cannot help me.' He shook his head slowly.

'How do you know?'

Don Quebranta smiled a spasmodic smile.

'Because I have tried. I had a doctor fetched here in the night from the town under the mountains. He was very much afraid, but he promised to cure me. He sent for drugs, and placed them on my eyes. I suffered many things, but day by day I grew worse, and my eyes were made a torment. Therefore I sent him home again; but, they tell me, he died on the way.'

'Our English Schools of Medicine excel those of Spain. Let me look at your eyes.'

The chief took off his soft hat with gentle gravity.

'If you are so kind, it may be tried. Besides there is a

penalty. It is known what happened to the doctor on the plains. I have not heard that he died comfortably.'

As he spoke he thrust his angled vulture face towards Detching, who made examination. Now, although Detching has never contributed to the literature of the subject, he has had a wide experience in Asia and Africa, and is a very sound eye-doctor. After an interval he spoke.

'I can cure you in a month—not less, perhaps more. If I succeed, will you let us go?'

'And what has the Señor Brunton done for me that I should let him go?' asked Don Quebranta. 'Shall I tell you? He insults me at all times by his looks. No, señor, he must pay or——'

'He is my friend, and I consider that I have something to say to the bargain.'

Don Quebranta shrugged his shoulders under his cloak. He was always chilly.

'So the kid said to the wolf,' he remarked politely. 'No, señor, you must leave the result to me. I will make no bargain. If you are satisfied to trust, well and good. What is your answer?'

'Who cares what the kid answered?' returned Detching smiling.

As the days went by Detching began to see wherein lay the power of the soft-spoken, terrible little chief. The yellow, bloodless hands dealt out life and death swiftly and without appeal. Reward came as unsparingly as punishment. At the same time, it occasionally occurred to Detching that the pendulum of the brigand's mind was not evenly weighted. He was insanely jealous of his position. He took council of none. He kept his subordinates ignorant of his designs. Only he made them know their master.

In due time the month wore round, while two or three messages passed up and down the passes between the chief and Ingham, whose haggling instincts were given full swing while the crafty little brigand laughed in his sleeve, sending evasive replies and laying down impossible conditions to prolong the negotiations.

Often during the evening hours as Detching sat with Don Quebranta over the fire on the terrace, the Spaniard would wander in talk into the past, making allusions which proved that his early life had been spent among very different scenes. One night as they chatted, Detching said: 'The month is almost at an end, señor.'

DON QUEBRANTA'S LONG KNIFE FLEW THROUGH THE AIR WITH A HISS

Don Quebranta sighed.

'It is true,' he answered. 'My eyes are healed, and I must lose the pleasure of your society. You will doubtless have gathered that I have not always been a vulture in an eyrie. My house was in the —— But that is forbidden. Now I am the *quebranta huesos*, a proud and solitary bird. My mode of life is rough, and I have no companion. I can assure you, señor, that your society has been a great boon to a very lonely man. I find it hard to make up my mind to say good-bye. Besides, the ransom of your friend has not yet arrived. But indeed you are free to go without him, if by any chance you are in a hurry to return to your own people.'

'You know that I cannot leave Brunton,' said Detching.

'And how can I let him go without a ransom? My children will grumble.'

'So they will,' agreed Detching, who by this time knew his man. 'Only yesterday I heard your fellows saying that you would not dare to let us go without a ransom.'

Don Quebranta was sitting in his usual attitude of a sick bird, his head buried in his cloaked shoulders. Now his beak-like nose and head shot up with the action of some startled wild thing.

'They said that?' he inquired softly.

'Someone said so. I don't know who, for I only overheard it. And, further, another added that the only thing in heaven or earth which you feared was the public opinion of your followers.'

The peaked, pallid face worked.

'They have not spoken to me,' he said in his gentlest tones.

'Some opinions are better hidden. Among such as these, public feeling is only uttered through a knife in the dark.'

'The public opinion of these pigs may go travelling through the sierras. I permit no opinions!' said Don Quebranta, and he remained sunk in sullen thought until Detching rose to say good-night before retiring to his bundle of *paja* within the cave.

Don Quebranta rose also and held out his hand.

'Señor, because you have been the only friend I have known for twenty years and taken a pleasure in, you and your companion shall go free at dawn! You shall also see the public opinion of my followers parade itself. It will be amusing, I promise you.'

'And I'm very sure we shall see something uncommon,' said Detching later as he gave the news to Brunton. 'I wonder how our little man will cow all this dirty crew. However, he's a good backer to have on our side.'

During the night they heard an amount of movement in the

outer cave, and when they were called out in the morning, they saw the whole band was gathered inside its rocky walls, while near the opening Don Quebranta sat on a raised and draped platform, rocking himself.

'The time has come, my children,' he said in his low silky voice, after saluting the Englishmen, 'to decide what shall be done with our captives. I have heard rumours that some have been offering suggestions. Is that so?'

The robbers drew a deep nervous breath and closed in nearer to each other with a curious shrinking movement. But not one of them answered.

'We did indeed demand a large ransom for these English gentlemen, but nothing has yet been paid. Meanwhile one of them has healed me of my bitter disease, and upon some amongst you also he has laid the hand of the restorer. Therefore, what shall we do in return?'

'Cut down our demand by half,' said a voice in the background.

'Who spoke, señores? Come out, my friend. It is well to see the face of the man one talks with.'

There was a hustling in the crowd, and a big sullen fellow was thrust to the front.

'So it is you, Vicente? I have long known you had views, and I am glad at last to have a chance of hearing them from yourself. So what say you to releasing our prisoners without ransom?'

'It must not be done,' replied the man with a sulky courage.

Don Quebranta laughed in his soft, wicked, sibilant way.

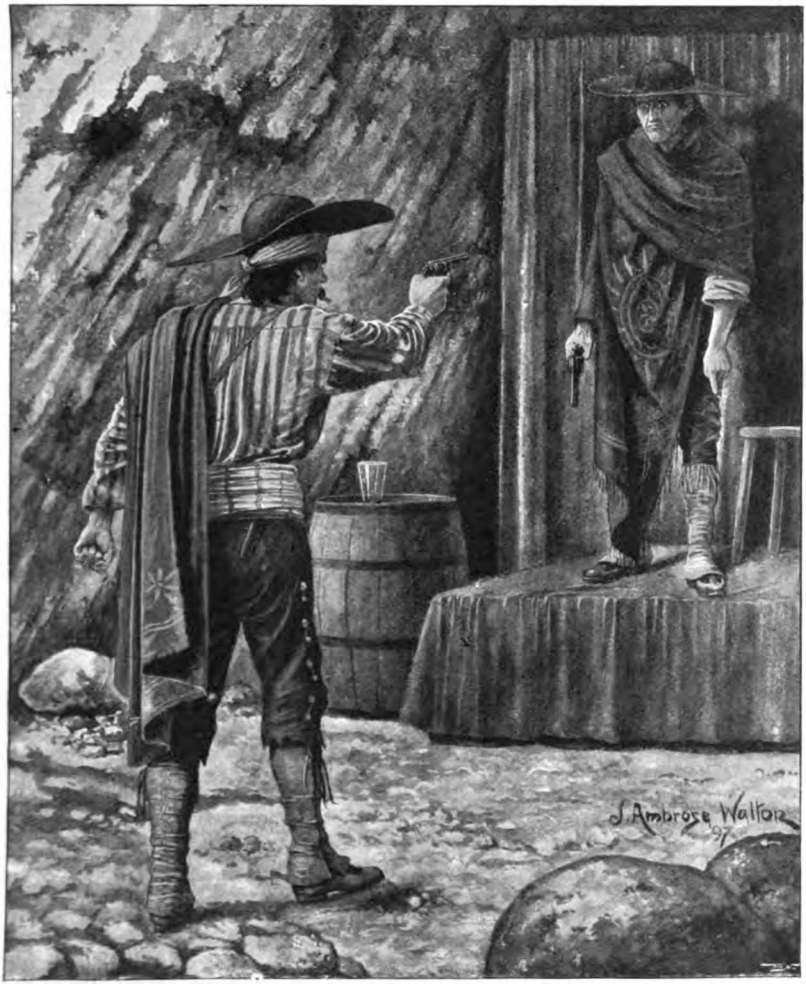
'But if I say it shall be so?' he asked, as if in hesitation.

Vicente for answer, with a rapid turn of the hand, covered the chief with his pistol.

'Pray wait a moment. For if you fire you will kill every living soul in the cave,' interposed Don Quebranta in his most polished manner. 'This curtain behind me is lined with powder-barrels, and I stand upon others. Now, my children, choose between this fool and me. If any of you shoot, you are very certain to hit the powder-kegs. Further, unless our good Vicente is at once disarmed, we will all go together.'

He stood upon his lean legs, his pistol turned not on the picturesquely attired group of men in front of him, but downwards at the red-draped platform. It was clear he was altogether in earnest. And so the band seemed to think. There was a scuffle as a dozen hairy, brown hands seized and disarmed the rebel who had dared to hold an opinion of his own.

'That is well, my children,' said Don Quebranta, turning his white head and bleared eyes from side to side. 'We are once more reconciled. And for you, señores,' he went on, making a sign of leave-taking to Detching, 'it is farewell. You, Joaquin,



HE STOOD WITH HIS PISTOL TURNED DOWNWARDS AT THE RED-DRAPED PLATFORM

will fetch these gentlemen a fowling-piece, not one of their own, which the goatherd envied, and which are in truth most excellent, but an old one. Then you with Manuel and Enriquez shall lead them to the road below the waterfall.'

Detching hesitated. He feared to leave the little vulture at the mercy of his fellows. Don Quebranta read his thoughts. He came to the edge of the improvised platform and shook Detching's hand.

'There is nothing to fear, my friend. I thank you for your skill and your companionship. And you, Señor Brunton, I salute. When next your life lies in the hand of another, respect him if for that fact alone. Farewell! Leave me with my children. It is not good that strangers should look upon the wrath of Don Quebranta Huesos.'

So they left him standing there with his huddled cloak, and his bald-browed malignant face, overmastering by sheer force of will two score of turbulent malcontents. Before the Englishmen entered the tunnel they heard horrible shrieks of agony from the cave, and the guides crossed themselves and muttered 'Aves' to be defended from the talons and tender mercies of Don Quebranta Huesos.

This is the story as Detching tells it in support of his often repeated assertion that a doctor's is the best travelling trade in the world.

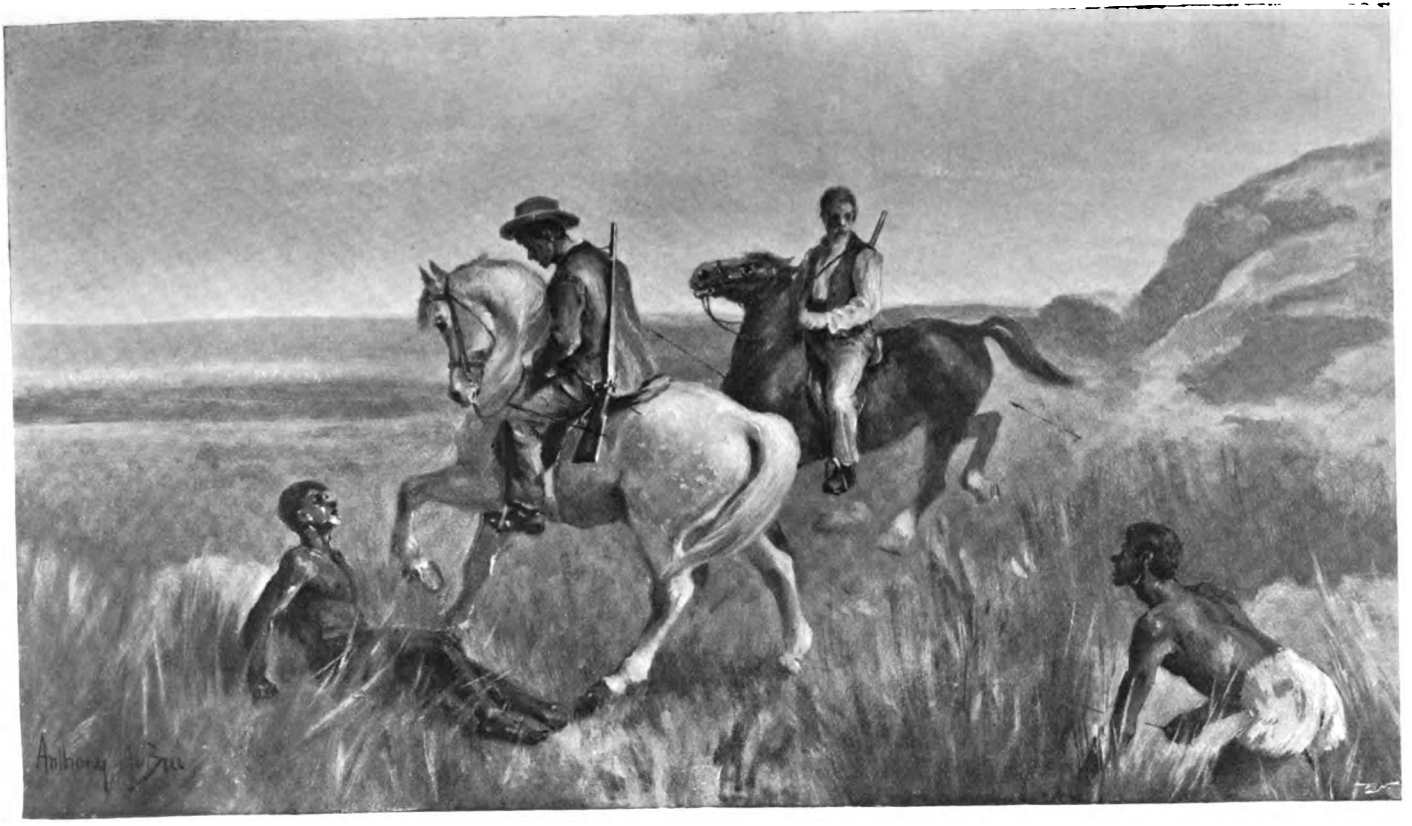
QUEER SPORT

BY HENDRIK B. KNOBLAUCH

ONE morning not long ago, snugly ensconced in my corner, I was dreamily watching the shadows of the clouds flitting across the barren slopes of some flat-topped hills on the Orange Free State uplands, when the engine emitted a shrill blast and a minute later our train drew up at a desolate-looking sandstone-built wayside station. A canvas-covered two-horse buggy stopped at a corner of the station while the engine was taking in water, and three dust-bespattered farmers—*boers*—alighted from it and stepped into the compartment whose sole occupant I had been since the train left Johannesburg the previous morning. In a minute or two we were once more on the move and speeding along in a south-westerly direction across the uninteresting-looking table-land that fills in the three hundred odd miles between the Vaal and Orange rivers. Ever and anon a herd of some forty or fifty springbuck turned tail and fled to the line of the horizon as we whisked along the gleaming metals; while colonies of little burrowing *mier* or ant-cats, startled out of their morning siesta, sat up on their hind legs like kangaroos in miniature, and, with looks of mingled surprise, curiosity, and perplexity, stared at the disturber of their peace as it shrieked and thundered past.

'Ah!' exclaimed the farmer who sat facing me—a grey-bearded old patriot whose white tie, sadly discoloured by red dust, bespoke him an elder of the Church—'do you see that naked *koppie* (hillock) over yonder, cousin Piet? My poor old father and I had a narrow squeak there once on an afternoon in '52. We were riding along quietly with our guns slung behind us, looking for a troop of bullocks that had strayed from the farm, when, on rounding that rocky spur to the right, we suddenly found ourselves in the midst of a party of bushmen. Father merely called out to me: "Look out, Koos! The bushmen are upon us!" when something whisked under my arm and an arrow stuck quivering in the pommel of my saddle. At the same time father's hat was knocked off by another arrow, a third tore its way through the leg of my trousers and grazed the shoulder of my horse. That saved our lives. The old horse I was riding gave a snort, shied, trod on a bushman, who yelled like a hyena when the hoofs struck him, and the next instant we were racing along for dear life, my father with his young horse close beside me and arrows whirr, whirring past and about us like winged snakes. Talk of bushman marksmanship! Bosh! I never saw worse shooting in my life. When we drew up ten minutes later, father and I had not so much as a scratch between us, although the old man was in a fearful temper about the loss of his new hat, for which he had paid six rixdollars at the store only the previous day. Ach, those bushmen! They wriggle and creep about among the stones like snakes, and one only becomes aware of their presence when their arrows whistle about one's head. Click, clock, cleck! rar-r, ror-r, rur-r!—that is their talk. They steal a sheep, a bullock, or a donkey, and eat every bit of it at a sitting; then they go without food for a week or until they can steal something else. Carrion they swallow like vultures, and roots like baboons. They never think of cooking what they eat. And yet our parson says they have souls like you and I and other people! Well, our parson has learnt many things and he ought to know; though it seems to me that if a bushman has a soul, a baboon ought to have a soul too.'

The bright green strip that fringes the course of the Orange river here rolled into view, and put a stop to the psychological trend of the elder's conversation. My friends alighted at the bridge station, and for the next four hundred miles, except when night drew the curtain over it all, I gazed upon a boundless expanse of monotonous brown karroo, the home of the lion, the hyena, the koodoo, and countless myriads of springbuck and other



THE OLD HORSE I WAS RIDING GAVE A SNORT, SHIED, AND TROD ON A BUSHMAN

game, in the days before the advent of the white man with his snorting, shrieking, earth-shaking steam-engine.

At the close of the second day after leaving the Orange river, we reach the south-western edge of the vast plateau known as the Karroo, and go thundering down the slopes of the Hexriver mountains into a world of vineyards and orchards and smiling cornfields and snowy white homesteads slumbering peacefully under the shelter of bluegums and oak trees and purple-bunched trellised vines. At daybreak I change trains at Worcester, and the rather shaky carriage in which I now find myself is whirled along in a south-easterly direction for some thirty miles, until the village of Robertson is sighted. Here I leave the rail for the road; and our hooded cart with its team of four horses travels sharply southwards along the red, dusty road under a burning sun, until about four hours later a deep gorge leads us through the mountains to a ferry over a deep, dark, palmetto-guarded stream. This we cross and turn sharply to the west again; and as the sun dips below the horizon I find myself at my destination —the white-walled, thatch-roofed, tree-sentinelled homestead of a 15,000-acre farm on the river Zonder Einde, whose dark green banks are lying in the foreground, while about two miles beyond a grand chain of mountains like a huge wall four thousand feet high runs parallel with the river and stands out sharp and needle-peaked against the silvery blue velvet of a peerless summer evening sky.

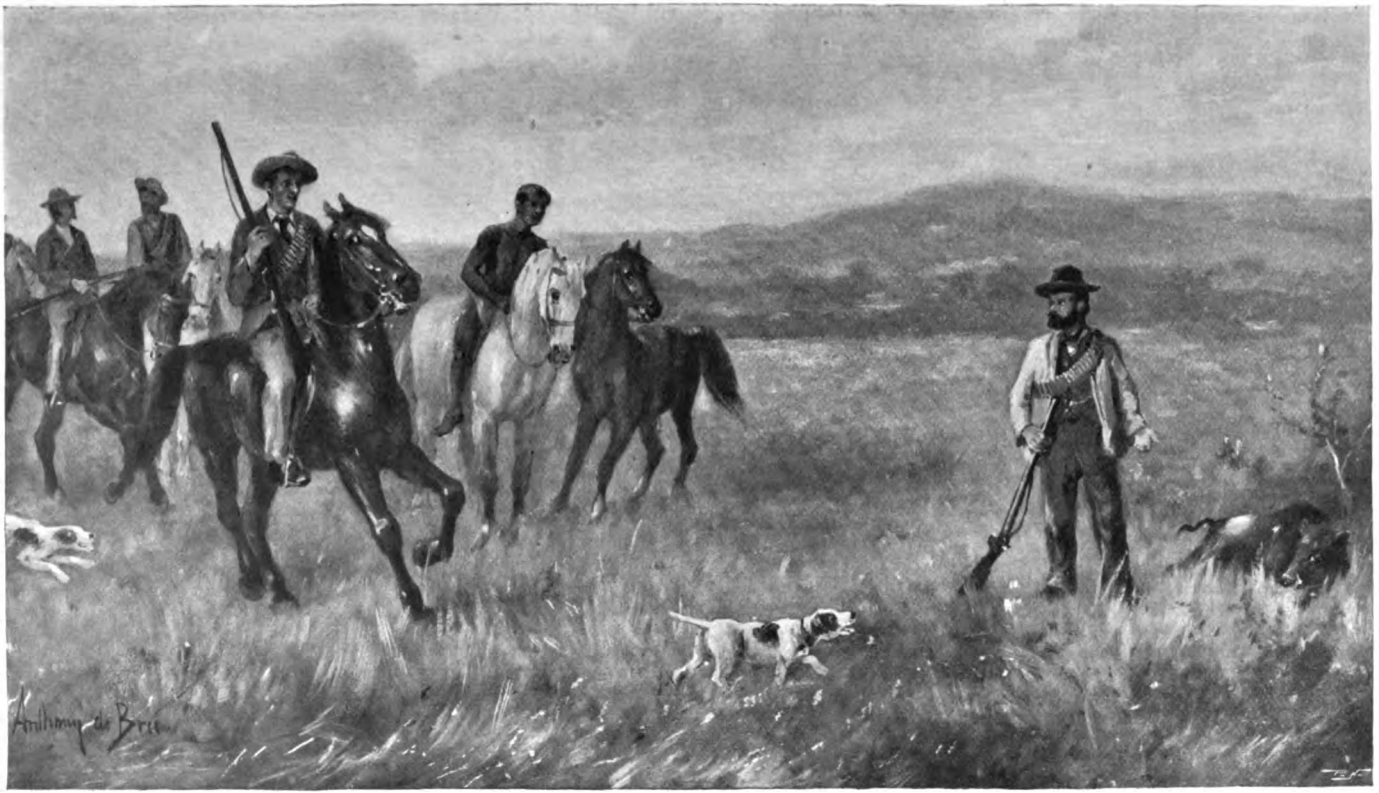
A bath in the river at a spot where its waters flow over a bed of rounded pebbles and silver sand; a visit to the stables, the ostrich camp, the cattle and sheep kraals and the huge circular corn-stacks; a delicious little supper and a quiet smoke under the verandah to the accompaniment of piano strains and a bottle of home-made liqueur; and then to bed and a dreamless sleep.

By half-past five next morning we are all on horseback. Our party, armed with double-barrelled shot-guns to a man, consists of my host, his three sons, four neighbouring farmers who have ridden over to join us in our day's sport, and myself: two Hottentot boys following with supplies for an *al fresco* lunch among the mountains. A couple of pointers and two or three other dogs have made up their minds to accompany us; and this they succeed in doing, despite the attempts of our boys to drive them back. For the sport we have in view to-day, dogs are distinctly *de trop*.

We cross the river and enter upon a wide plain covered with reedlike grass and patches of scrubby bell-heather bush. Every

now and again we come to some narrow, palmetto-lined channel in which the foam-covered icy-cold waters of a torrent from the mountains are rushing over a bed of white water-worn pebbles on their way to the river below. Then the ground gets swampy and the dogs put up snipe on every side and look disgusted because we do not fire. A stretch of greenish-brown bracken lies before us. The place is known to be a favourite resort for *grijsbuck;* and as we have been commissioned to shoot a couple of these shy antelopes to replenish the home stock of fresh venison, we advance in line for the purpose. Our host, who is riding close beside me, says to me in an undertone: 'Keep your gun at full cock and as soon as you see a twig move ahead, blaze away. It is the only chance one has of shooting a *grijsbuck* here.' Not a minute later there is a sudden rustle in the bracken about twenty yards in front of me and I notice, or fancy I notice, the reddish patch that betrays the flank of a *grijsbuck* on the move. Instantly I stop my horse, bring the gun to my shoulder and fire. My aim has proved true; I have hit something; but what in the name of all that's creepy can that something be? Great Scot! assuredly not a *grijsbuck*; for the series of unearthly yells and piercing squeals that breaks upon the morning air like an avalanche immediately after the report of my gun, setting my hair on end and nearly making the horse of the nigger behind me turn a backward somersault, does not—cannot—proceed from the throat of any antelope under the sun. 'Wh-what is it?' 'What in the wide world have you shot?' and suchlike queries are addressed to me while I try to urge my frightened horse in the direction of my too-boisterous quarry. I can only reply: 'I am sure I don't know. Let's go and see.' But our host has already dismounted and run to the spot, where, turning round with a smile, he exclaims loud enough for everyone to hear: 'Why, you have shot a pig!' A roar of laughter greets this explanation of the mystery and I am mercilessly chaffed for mistaking a big piebald boar for a small red *grijsbuck*. In a minute or two the unfortunate pig breathes its last, and half an hour later we are on the march again, leaving three newly killed *grijsbuck* hidden with the porker in the bracken to await our return.

A mile or two further on we cross a ridge or offshoot from the mountain chain on our left, and find ourselves looking down into a beautiful valley, wherein is situated one of the outlying gardens upon the estate of our host. This 'garden' or plantation is as large as a decent-sized English farm, including as it does several acres of vineyard, a huge orchard of peach, apricot, pear,



'WHY, YOU HAVE SHOT A PIG!'

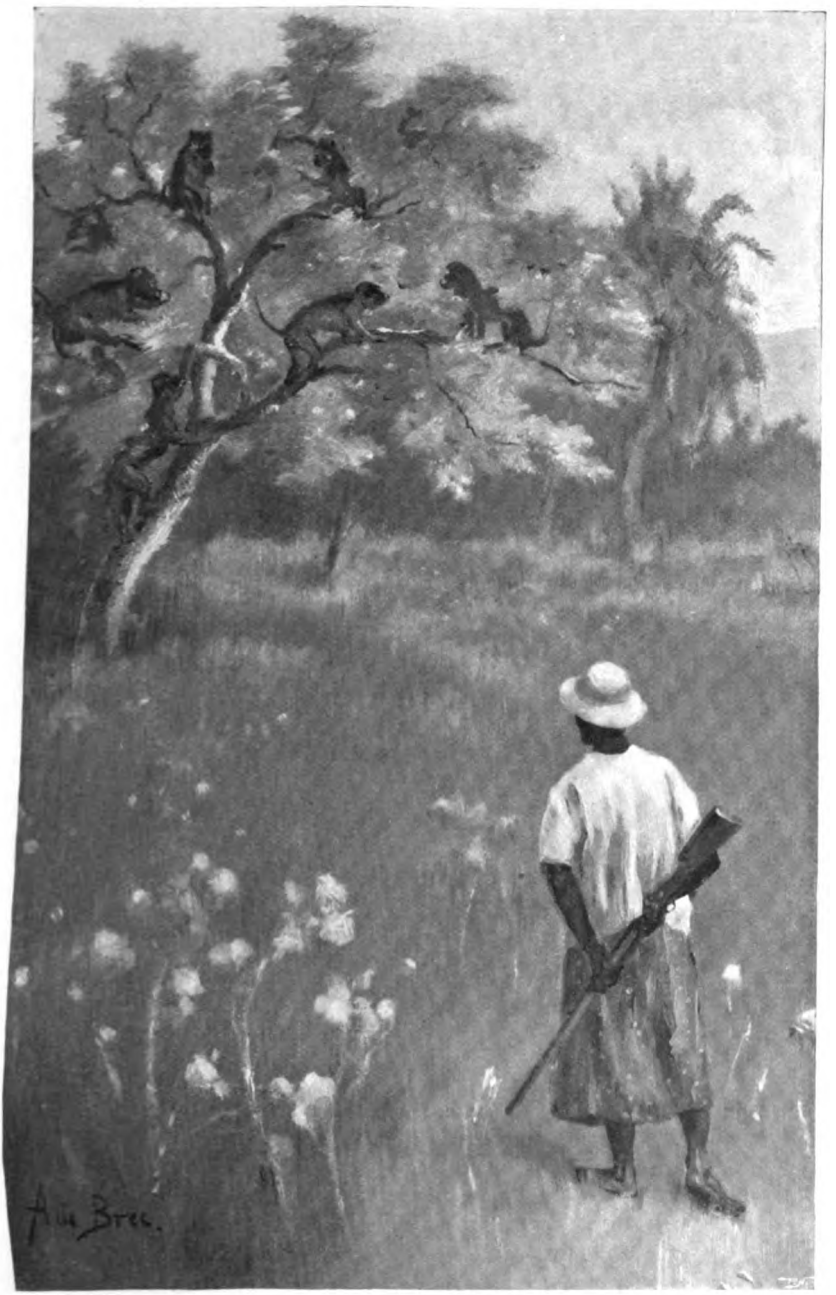
apple, and plum trees, stretches of maize, pumpkins, water-melons, strawberries, Cape gooseberries, &c., the whole surrounded by a green wall of closely planted quince and fig trees twenty to thirty feet high. And what a wealth of fruit and vegetables! A whole world of magnificent grapes, peaches, apricots, pears, apples, plums, figs, quinces, melons, pumpkins, and what not, all at the disposal of birds, baboons, and porcupines, provided these latter can manage to evade the gardener's rickety old single-barrelled muzzle-loader and his rather more formidable steel trap.

'Well, August, and how are things this morning?' I ask the grizzly little old Hottentot gardener.

'No, master,' replies August, laying aside his spade with a sigh; 'I feel I shall have to give up the garden and ask the *baas* (master) for a post as shepherd. Birds and baboons all day long, porcupines from sunset to sunrise, rheumatism for ever and ever —no, master, I really cannot stand it any longer. The porcupines bite holes in all my finest pumpkins, take out the pips, and then walk off. Only last week I caught a three-legged one in the trap. Last year I found a hind leg in the trap one morning without the porcupine; last week I found the porcupine in the trap without the hind leg. The stump had healed, and the old thief was as fat as though he had been stall-fed. And the birds are even a greater nuisance than the porcupines. While I am busy chasing the *rooivlerk spreeouws* (*Amydri morio*), *muisvools* (colies), and *spechters* (red-breasted woodpeckers) out of the fruit trees, the *witgat spreeouws* (*Amydri bicolor*) and *rooibekkies* (little waxbills) peck away at the grapes in thousands: and when I get down to the vineyard with my gun, the *rooivlerke* and other birds make merry over my peaches and apricots. But the damage done by all these combined counts as nothing beside that committed by the baboons. I dare not leave the garden to go to the farm. As soon as my back is turned the rascals are in the trees, and when they have gorged themselves to the full on all my best fruit, they amuse themselves by picking what is left, giving it a bite, and then throwing it to the ground. And when they have cleared a tree of its fruit, they start tearing off its branches. While this is going on in the orchard, a troop of them will be busy in the vineyard. They will catch hold of a bunch of grapes with both hands, and try to wrench it off by force. Then, when the grapes are squeezed into pulp, they will let go, and try their strength upon the next bunch; until when, after smashing hundreds of bunches, a baboon succeeds in tearing off

one, the whole troop immediately falls to fighting over the possession of it, breaking, tearing, and scattering the vines right and left in the fight. And they know the difference between a man and a woman just as well as you and I do, master. A woman does not carry a gun; a man does—and they know it. When my wife, Aai Sanna, comes to drive them away, they show their teeth and won't move. So the other day, noticing a troop of baboons in that large peach tree at the corner, I crept into the house, rammed a stiff charge of buckshot into the old gun, slipped on one of Aai Sanna's dresses, and then, holding the gun behind me, I walked straight up to the troop. They did not even trouble to look at me, thinking I was Aai Sanna, of course. I got within ten yards, and then, when I had five of them in line, I suddenly brought out the gun and fired at the nearest of the five. Ha! ha! ha! master, you should have seen them! I thought for the moment I had killed every baboon in the tree. Down they fell like stones, every one of them, with fright and surprise! I knocked over two big ones with the stock of my gun before they could get away; three were lying stone dead, killed by my charge of buckshot; while another one, also hit, limped away a short distance, and there lay moaning like a human being until I walked up and killed it. I had never before killed six baboons all in a heap; but Aai Sanna's dress was too much for the baboons—yes, master, too much for the baboons. Ha! ha! ha! But—what is that? Ah, I thought so, master; look! the troop cannot be far off. There, there, see!—there is the old sentinel, the head baboon, watching us from the rock on the right of the gorge. Master can see him through the glass.'

I turned my field-glass in the direction indicated, and there, sure enough, on the topmost ledge of a scallop-shaped rock of black and red sandstone, about six hundred yards off, sits a big baboon intently watching us. Our plans are made on the spot, and executed there and then. We ride down the valley in a body away from where the baboon sits watching. The gardener follows on foot with his gun; if the baboons see him leave they will immediately advance upon the garden. About a mile below we divide our forces into two parties, the one wheeling sharply to the left behind the ridge forming that side of the valley, the other to the right behind the other ridge. Our object is to get in the rear of the baboons, and to lie in ambush, the gardener meanwhile waiting at the bottom of the valley for about an hour, and then marching straight back to the garden and driving the baboons in our direction. Once behind the ridges, therefore, we



I SLIPPED ON ONE OF AAI SANNA'S DRESSES, AND HOLDING THE GUN BEHIND ME, WALKED STRAIGHT UP TO THE TROOP

gallop sharply towards the mountain, and some distance up the side dismount, leaving the boys in charge of our horses. Then we crawl over two rocky necks of land, and form a semicircle far in the rear of the baboons, who are busy among the fruit trees by now. Our ambush extends from the top of the left ridge, through the gorge, to the top of the ridge opposite. We are posted about thirty yards apart, my position being almost at the centre of the line, in a dense mass of canebrake overhanging the stream that waters the valley. Here I amuse myself for some time by feeding the rockfish in a pool beside me with some crumbs from my pockets; and then I begin to wish that somebody had invented smokeless tobacco, just as somebody else has invented smokeless gunpowder. For we have received strict orders to refrain from lighting our pipes, lest the smoke should scare away the baboons. At length, hearing a rustle on my left, I peer through the screen of cane, and become by chance a witness of a most fascinating sight. Just across the stream, and not fifteen yards from where I lie hidden, is a bare patch of ground, and upon this a magnificent secretary bird has just swooped down, and is in the act of tackling a big orange-and-brown cobra capello. The snake, evidently surmising the intention of its most formidable enemy, cranes its flattened head forward a foot from the ground, and darts at the bird's legs with a hiss. But quick as lightning the secretary strikes out with its left wing, and down goes the reptile's head on the ground. And now follows a duel *à outrance*. The bird tramples on the snake before the latter recovers from the force of the stunning blow it has just received; but in a second the capello has regained its senses, twirled itself round the secretary's legs, and with eyes gleaming and darting tongue it tries to strike at its enemy's breast. The rage of the bird at this becomes wonderful to witness. The yellow skin round its eyes turns livid. The black elongated feathers on its head and neck fly forward with a swish like escaped steel springs. Its beautiful bluish-white, black-tipped wings are raised suddenly and brought forward with a whirr, and then—flash!—its sharp beak is buried in the capello's neck, and the snake's head wrenched off as I look. At this moment I hear a shot fired in the garden below, and to my regret the secretary-bird stretches its wings and carries off the wriggling snake. I put my ear to the ground and concentrate all my senses upon trying to detect the approach of the baboons. At last, yes, I can hear them now. A succession of short 'Owm! owms!' followed by the creaking of broken twigs and the scattering of some loose shingle, and they are upon us. Poor

baboons! A perfect hailstorm of buckshot and S.S.G. pours in upon them from the side of the ridge on my right. With howls and groans of dismay and fright they rush down into the valley and scramble across the stream under our sweeping fire. What a troop of baboons! Forty or fifty at least run straight into the guns on the other side of the stream, only to retire scattered and broken. The gardener, the two boys, and the dogs, however, are waiting for them in the valley just below, and again the remnant are driven our way to face the buckshot. I fire until I become fairly sick of the groans of the poor things, who, on finding themselves hemmed in on all sides, become almost like human beings in the sighs and sounds they emit; and then I step aside and make way for the survivors to pass up the gorge. We count thirty-seven dead baboons among the rocks and in the stream, and I remark to our host that it will be a long time before those that have escaped will venture near the garden again.

'Oh, no,' he replies, 'they will all be back again to-morrow afternoon with as many of their relations as they can gather together. They will merely take the precaution to station more sentries about here so as to prevent another ambush. We have to make a sortie like this three or four times every season. You will find shot-marks in several of those we have killed to-day, proving that the bearers have been under fire before. There are plenty of berries and wild fruit in the mountains for them; but since they prefer stealing to getting their food honestly, they must stand the consequences. Come, let us go and have some lunch now.'

It is blazing hot by this time; the shade of an overhanging rock, with occasional drops of water falling from the moss above into the crystal stream at our feet, is, therefore, doubly grateful. The boys come up with the horses and spread our lunch on the sand in the shade. Then the gardener and Aai Sanna appear on the scene with a big basket of peaches, grapes, apricots, and figs, a magnificent melon, a cane-protected stone jar of pontac, and a bundle of green maize for the horses. After which we fall to. Lunch finished, we have a smoke, and the pontac passes round and elicits all sorts and conditions of hairbreadth hunting adventures; after which come forty winks, and then we are on our way home again. As we have a far stranger chase than that of the morning in view for to-night, we need rest and a bathe, both of which we obtain to perfection before sundown.

An ertvark-*cum*-porcupine hunt is set down for to-night. *Ertvark* (pronounced *airtfărk*) is the name of the first-named

animal in South Africa—the only part of the world he has thus far deemed good enough to honour with his presence as a native. But in Europe and the United States (and other savage countries), scientists, when they speak of him, bury him under a heap of aliases, such as *earth-hog*, *ant-pig*, *aardvark*, and even *Orycteropus capensis*. And no wonder the naturalist makes sport of the ertvark's name, considering the sport the ertvark gets out of the naturalist's person. The naturalist will ride along quietly over the South African hills or through the South African valleys, his thoughts far away with people like Linnæus, Buffon, and Humboldt, when plump goes his horse's foreleg into an ertvark hole, and the naturalist is sent sprawling into the mud! Or the naturalist will be walking across a South African plain, sketching in his notebook the peculiar knee-joint of that hitherto unknown rock-salamander just discovered by him, when—crash! —down he goes into darkness and dust in a seven-foot ertvark hole, scaring the solitary owl at the bottom into fits! But the Cape farmer is not a naturalist; he fails to see the humorous side of an ertvark's hole; and when that hole causes him to measure his length on the ground and his favourite saddle-horse to break a foreleg, he will collect his neighbours before nightfall, hunt out the maker of that hole and as many more of his tribe as he and his party can lay hands on in the moonlight, and slaughter the whole lot as remorselessly as the Canaanites of old used to slaughter the Amalekites, and *vice versa*.

It is a lovely night. The sky is cloudless, the moon nearly full, and myriads of frogs, crickets, and other insects are calling, singing, and chirping along the river's banks; while close to the house some owls are hooting from the telegraph poles, and a couple of nightjars making merry in their melancholy way under the bluegums. Our party is larger than it was in the morning. Not only have the four neighbouring farmers remained to join in the fun, but some half-dozen of the farm labourers armed with spades and thongs of bullock hide have been pressed into service —for what purpose will be seen presently—and all the farm dogs, to the number of a score or more, are ready and eager to be off. No guns this time, excepting a single one to be used in case of emergency only; but sticks, sticks, sticks—*knopkieries*, blackthorns, quince-sticks, and what not—everywhere and on all sides. A light open waggon drawn by four mules takes us some distance from the homestead into the dry karroo soil away from the mountains. Here the mules are unharnessed and tied up, and the dogs let loose. Not a tree to be seen anywhere; only

stretches of red saline soil and rhinoceros bush, with here and there a small mound capped by a low thicket casting a shadow in the moonlight, and showing the centre of an ertvark's subterranean castle. Our host sent a man on horseback in the afternoon to mark the fresh burrowings, and we advance at once to the nearest mound. A frightened hare starts off from under our feet, and immediately a string of dogs are in pursuit. A volley of shouts, calls, and threats serves to bring the canine battalion back, however, and we set to work without further ado. The fresh burrowing showing the entrance lies just below the steepest side of the first artificial hillock we come to; while in the rear of this hillock or mound are three outlets or escape valves, at each of which two men armed with stout sticks take their stand, the rest of us crowding round the entrance hole. Three or four dogs have already crept into the hole, and the others are yelping and barking outside. In a moment we hear the old dog who leads the van snarling underground, and then come a grunt and some yelps as though one of the dogs has got hurt. 'Run for the gun! There's a porcupine in the hole! I know his grunt!' sings out one of the party. Like an arrow I head for the waggon and return with the gun. 'That's right! *You* know how to shoot a pig! We will light fires in the escape holes, smoke him out, and then you can shoot him. Only, remember, you must aim low in the moonlight!' The dogs are called off, green bushes propped into the three holes in the rear and set alight, while I take my stand on the top of the mound with my back to the flames, my gun at full cock, and the chief exit immediately below me. There is smoke enough in all conscience. Another moment and there comes a grunt, followed by the sound of a body stumbling forward, and out rushes a splendid porcupine with quills atilt. I take careful aim--the porcupine is not ten yards off—and pull the trigger. 'TJIP!' goes the right hammer, but no report follows. I pull the other trigger. 'TJIP!' goes the other hammer, but not a ghost of a report. I drop the barrel. . . . 'Why, bless me, the gun is not loaded!' I cry in consternation. 'Well, you are a ninny!' exclaims somebody amid the roar of laughter; 'why on earth didn't you load it?' 'Well,' I replied, 'I saw no cartridges about the waggon, and naturally concluded they must be in the gun, of course!' That stops their laughter: the man who brought the gun to the waggon forgot to bring the cartridges.

But the dogs are in again, and this time there can be no mistake. The subterranean barks, growls, and yelps increase in

volume by the second, until all at once a dog rushes out howling with a flap of skin torn from his shoulder. 'Ah, that's the ertvark. The dog has been under his claws!' exclaims our host. 'Dig away, men, and guard all the exits!' The mound begins to crumble under the men's spades and soon dwindles away altogether, revealing a sort of ante-chamber, from which several passages shoot out in different directions. A couple of dogs are barking in one passage, two or three in another, while the best dog of the lot, firmly wedged in between the two walls of a narrow tunnel, is growling and howling by turns. 'Dig away here, men! Geluk has cornered the boar!' Again the clods come tumbling down, but the old dog sticks to the ertvark's broad stumpy tail

'WHY, BLESS ME, THE GUN IS NOT LOADED!'

like a leech. Doubtless, experience has taught him that an ertvark is a more dangerous customer to grab by the leg than even an ostrich; the latter kicks, the former tears. One of our host's shepherds—a wrinkled little old combination of Hottentot and bushman—is lying flat on the ground above the hole. Watching his opportunity, he passes a thong round one of the ertvark's hindlegs in a twinkling, and with the aid of a pole and a clever slipknot pulls the thong tight. And now begins an extraordinary tug-of-war—fifteen men and a dog against one solitary ertvark. To the philosopher who asked what would happen if an irresistible object were to run full tilt into an immovable one, I can only reply: I don't know; but if any philosopher were to ask

me what would happen if an irresistible force tied to an immovable object were to start pulling in the opposite direction, I could tell him: *The rope would break.* We on our side are pulling with might and main; the ertvark on his side holds on with his claws like grim death; the thong snaps and—we sit down; more forcibly than elegantly, perhaps; but still—we sit down, all of us. By the time we are ready to try again the ertvark has burrowed a foot deeper into the earth, and the spades have to be brought into requisition again. This time, and with the aid of a bull's-eye lantern, the old shepherd succeeds in fastening two thongs, one to each hindleg. And now the ertvark is no longer immovable; he is coming backwards inch by inch; we are too

THE DOG RETIRES WITH A HOWL

strong for him, and he gives in. A dog rushes forward and tries to get a bite somewhere; but the ertvark gives him a tap and the dog retires with a howl and a shoulder ripped open. Then the old bushman skips round and rains down blows with his *knopkierie* upon the ertvark's tubular tapering snout and long-eared head, while we continue dragging it backwards. Soon all is over, and the beast is dead. The old dog and the little old bushman have certainly borne the brunt of the fight. The former will get the tongue, the latter a ham of the ertvark; while our host kindly allots me the skin as a trophy.

The dead beast is hoisted into the waggon by four of the men, and the dogs put on the scent again under a fresh mound. Once

more the barks and growls are repeated, the mound scooped away and the central gallery laid bare. A young dog creeps into one of the passages and hurries back with a howl of fright. 'Hullo, what's this? Where's the bull's-eye? . . . Just take a look,' exclaims the speaker, one of our guests, handing me the lantern after a prolonged stare into the passage. I stoop down, flash the lantern into the hole, and recoil precipitately, not a little startled myself by a pair of glaring red eyes set in a villanous-looking head, crowned by a bristling mane which I find within a foot or two of my nose when I peep down the passage. 'Oh, you need not be frightened,' says my friend laughing, 'it's only one of those cowardly thieves—a *naderoe jakhals* (spotted hyena). Here—Geluk! Geluk! !—good dog! at him, Geluk!' There is a scramble and a tussle, a sudden commingling of barks, snarls, growls, and yelps, and then old Geluk emerges victorious a second time. The hyena is dragged out and promptly knocked on the head.

It is getting on for eleven o'clock by now and the excitement and fatigue are beginning to tell upon us, when of a sudden there is a scuffle in the gallery below, followed by shouts of 'Look out!' and 'Stop him!' We spring to our feet just in time to assist the dogs in heading off another porcupine. The creature at once turns to bay in the centre of our circle of men and dogs. It bristles with quills all over, and immediately either man or dog approaches, it darts at its would-be assailant's legs, and makes him promptly scamper to the rear. And now for the last time the shepherd proves his skill and his descent from a nation of hunters. With his stick and lasso he runs forward into the circle, avoids the rush of the porcupine, throws the noose over its head and jerks the creature off its legs. After which a few *kierie* blows serve to put an end to its existence.

Then we drive home; and the sun sits high in the heavens next day when I wake up and feel as though a whole century of rest would barely suffice to fit me for such another baboon-ertvark-porcupine hunt.

RECOLLECTIONS OF FOOTBALL AT CAMBRIDGE

BY FRANK MITCHELL

THOUGH but just down, as the term goes, yet one's football days at Cambridge are as irrevocably past as though one had taken one's degree in the dark ages, and the temptation to write of them now that they are fresh in the mind is too strong to resist.

No freshman who hopes to distinguish himself in football can do better than inquire of his friends or of some master at his school as to which college would be best for him. At Cambridge four or five colleges are generally in the front rank of Rugby football, and it is quite natural that if one is being constantly seen by the authorities one's talents will stand a much greater chance of being recognised. Not that the fact of a man being at a smaller college puts him out of the hunt. A wise captain knows in his heart that a good man at a small college may be easily overlooked, and consequently always plays as many of the men sent up for trial games as he possibly can—just as a manager of a shoot beats his outlying ground first. Many colleges have quite a history in the game. From my own college, Caius, we have turned out in the past Morison, Aston, Jeffery, Marshall, Maturin, Goodham, Tucker, Todd, Jacob, E. Bromet, Balfour, Threlfall, and many others whose names are well-known in football history. Other colleges, as Clare, Trinity, and Jesus, can point to equal, if not better, records.

The 'fresher' will, in answer to the notice on his college board that 'anyone who wishes to play Rugby is to turn up at the college ground at 2.30,' play in his college trials, and if he shows promise will have his name sent up for the freshman's match.

Every year some fifty or sixty names are thus sent up, and those in power receive endless letters from old Blues and masters, urging the claims of most of them for a trial. However, only thirty can be tried, and many are disappointed. The freshers generally start their game with some attempt at combination, but they in most cases know nothing of one another's play, and failure results; then comes the frantic effort to do some smart piece of play by oneself. The example is contagious, and the game ends in a case of 'everyone for himself.' However, the captain has to make the best of it, for regular college matches have not yet begun, so he picks out what he imagines to be the best of the freshmen, and puts them into the so-called seniors' game.

After this one sits and waits, and the writer has the most vivid recollection of sitting over a fire with two friends when a card came asking him to play for the 'Varsity *v.* Guy's. The good wishes of his friends and his regrets at having slacked so the last day or two are fresh in his mind. The match arrives, and others after it, generally against the weaker London clubs to begin with; the fresher soon begins to realise that he is fast becoming a regular member, his hopes of getting to Queen's are stronger, and now he begins to have confidence in himself, and play his right game. The matches against Richmond, the Scottish and Blackheath follow one another in quick succession, and the team, now a happy family, is introduced to the methods of fifteens from Wales, Ireland, and Scotland. The last match in my first year was against Dublin. They brought with them many wearers of the green cap, but the game ended in a win for us, owing to a magnificent run by C. Wells in the very last minute of the game. The side was chosen and we prepared ourselves for the great day. It was by no means reassuring to us to hear that Robinson, one of our best forwards, had influenza, and that it was doubtful whether George Druce could play. In the one case our fears were realised, in the other we were all glad to find things had been exaggerated. Our training consisted of meeting on Garret Hostel Bridge at eight sharp, and then adjourning to some common breakfast. The meal generally took place in the hall of the college which supplied the captain, and it was such as training breakfasts generally are. The college cook has one fixed standard in his head, and wild horses would not induce him to deviate from it. As regards smoking, the men are in most cases asked to give it up till after dinner. In the afternoon the team meets again, and running with the ball, dribbling, and kicking fill

up an hour or so. Many of the players do not find this enough. It stands to reason that the burly forward, nearly fourteen stone, will need more work than the more spare outside. Each man is left to his own discretion. Some play squash rackets—an excellent means of keeping fit—others indulge in boxing, dumbbells, clubs, &c., and all do their utmost to turn out as fit as possible. In my time we trained for a fortnight—that is to say, we took extra exercise. I do not believe—and I think that most men agree with me now—that it pays to train too much for the game. I have always found that one played better when short of a gallop or two than when trained to the hour.

The team generally stay in Cambridge until the eve of the Oxford match, when they all go to town together and stay at the same hotel, the idea being to enable the men to constitute a perfect combination in every way. The hopes and fears on the way to the ground are common to all those who indulge in contests of this nature, but perhaps there is a little extra zest and keenness in a 'Varsity match, and one feels that one would rather win that game than be picked for all the Internationals for ten years to come.

The great time has come; men chat with any friends on the opposite side, then off go the coats now donned for the first time by many of the team. He would be a callous creature who does not feel a thrill of pleasure pass through him as he hears the roar when the side go on the field. There is nothing like it, and one can never experience it again.

In my first year, though we had many brilliant individuals, Neilson, Gowans, Field, Tucker, Nicholl amongst them, yet we were at the best a scratch pack. It was the first year of the four three-quarter system. Our backs had not mastered even the rudiments of it, but the Oxford men, under the captaincy of Conway Rees, had become quite proficient. Our forwards were not together, and we were well beaten, though the score was only a try to nil.

The second year I played the Oxford captain was E. M. Carey. He had by his own magnificent example, aided by a really fine set of backs, got together such a team that the public were unanimous in classing it with the famous fifteen of Harry Vassall. Our side was a happy-go-lucky sort of affair. With a sturdy and determined set of forwards, we had for the greater part of the season contented ourselves with heeling out to our backs. Against the weaker teams that we played this plan worked fairly well, but a famous Scotch club came down to Cambridge, bringing with them a half who stood on our side of the scrum and received the ball when it came out.

Our appeals to the referee were of no avail, so we forwards decided to try to do something on our own account, and thereby we discovered our real strength. How we got on against Oxford is well known. We pushed them all over the field, and though we had expected a sound thrashing, the match was drawn, after what old players have told me was one of the soundest exhibitions of forward play ever seen in the game.

In the next season six of the same forward side played again, and the backs were strengthened. Every man will call to mind some team as the one from which he received more enjoyment than from any of the others he has played for. Such are my feelings with regard to the Cambridge side of 1895. It has been the good fortune of the writer to play in important matches all over the United Kingdom for some five years, but the recollection of that Christmas term at Cambridge in '95 is sweetest in his memory, and the triumphs are as fresh in his recollection as though they had taken place but yesterday. The 'Varsity match was played in a fog, and we won by a goal to nil—no large score, it is true, but at the same time the result was never for an instant in doubt.

Of other matches played the most enjoyable ones were those with Irish and Scotch visiting teams; for in addition to the joys of the match itself we had the pleasure of being the hosts of the opposing side in the evening. The Scotchmen came with their pipes, the Irishmen just brought themselves, ready for any fun. The proctors especially afforded them amusement, even as the officials in hunting caps at Trinity, Dublin, amused us when we went over for the return.

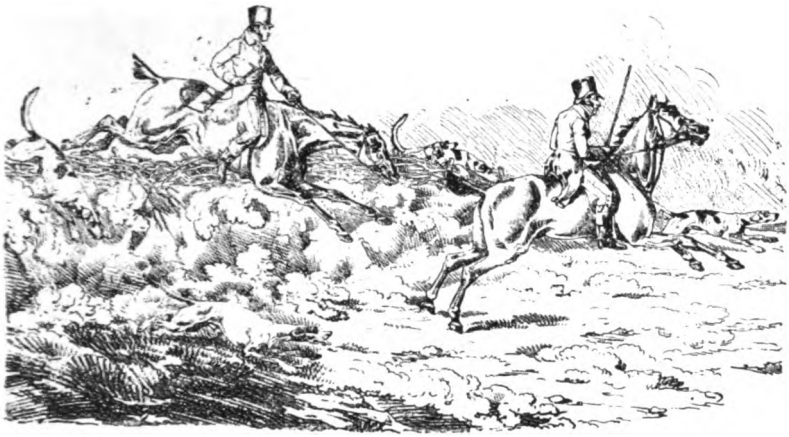
No one who was up with the late H. G. Fuller, for many years president of the club, is ever likely to forget the debt that Cambridge owes to him. When he first took over the reins of management the affairs of the club were in a state of chaos. After a few years things were put straight, and in his mind there originated the idea of the 'Varsity clubs buying a ground for themselves. Until last season it was the custom to hire the Corpus College ground, and on it there has been played many a fine match; but difficulties were foreseen, and Mr. Fuller saw the right way out of them. Had he lived a few more months he would have found his ideas become a fact, and to him mainly the University owes its new ground. He was a player in his day second to none, and in this respect his advice was always keenly sought after and religiously acted upon. Even within the last few years he was in the field, and a tale is told of an anxious old

lady watching a match in which he was figuring prominently, who is said to have exclaimed, 'How unkind it is of them to knock that old gentleman about so!'

His last note to the writer, written during his long and most painful illness, was brief, but it showed his great interest in the club. It was to wish us a good season, and it strictly enjoined me to see that Mr. Gray was elected president in his stead. Mr. Gray is now in his third year of office, and all Cambridge men know and appreciate the work he has done for us.

Another figure familiar to all Cambridge Rugby men was that of C. Saint. He was closely associated with Mr. Fuller for many years, and it is strange that both of them should have been lost to us within a few months. Better servant a club never had, and his great interest and concern on our behalf endeared him to all. Peace be to his ashes!

The only regret one has—it is one shared in common with many—is that it is all over and can never recur. Never does one play football under such perfect conditions. All are friends, all have the happy undergraduate disregard for the future. Examinations have but little terror, for the Tripos fever does not, as a rule, attack one until the football season is over. In short, if a man cannot play and enjoy his 'footer' at the 'Varsity, he can have no real interest in the game, or hope to have any afterwards.



A FRIENDLY MOUNT

BY COLONEL C. E. STACK

A FEW years since, when walking round the Grand National course at Liverpool previous to the decision of the big event of the meeting, while pausing at Becher's Brook I heard a voice behind me: 'Rather a different course from what we had at our Dowlutpore Meeting, Colonel!' Turning round I was hailed by my old friend Godower, whom I had not met for many years, and whom I had known intimately in days gone by in India, where we had soldiered together. Godower was a smart cavalry officer, who, when I knew him, was in a lancer regiment; a keen sportsman and fine horseman, both over a country and on the flat. He always said he felt ever grateful to me as having been his first instructor in pig-sticking, and for having given him his first mount for a race. A similarity of tastes and a keen love of sport in all its branches had thrown us much together, so the pleasure of the present rencontre was mutual.

As we strolled round the course we recalled many stirring incidents of sport in bygone days, of racing and chasing and gallops after the 'grim, grey boar.'

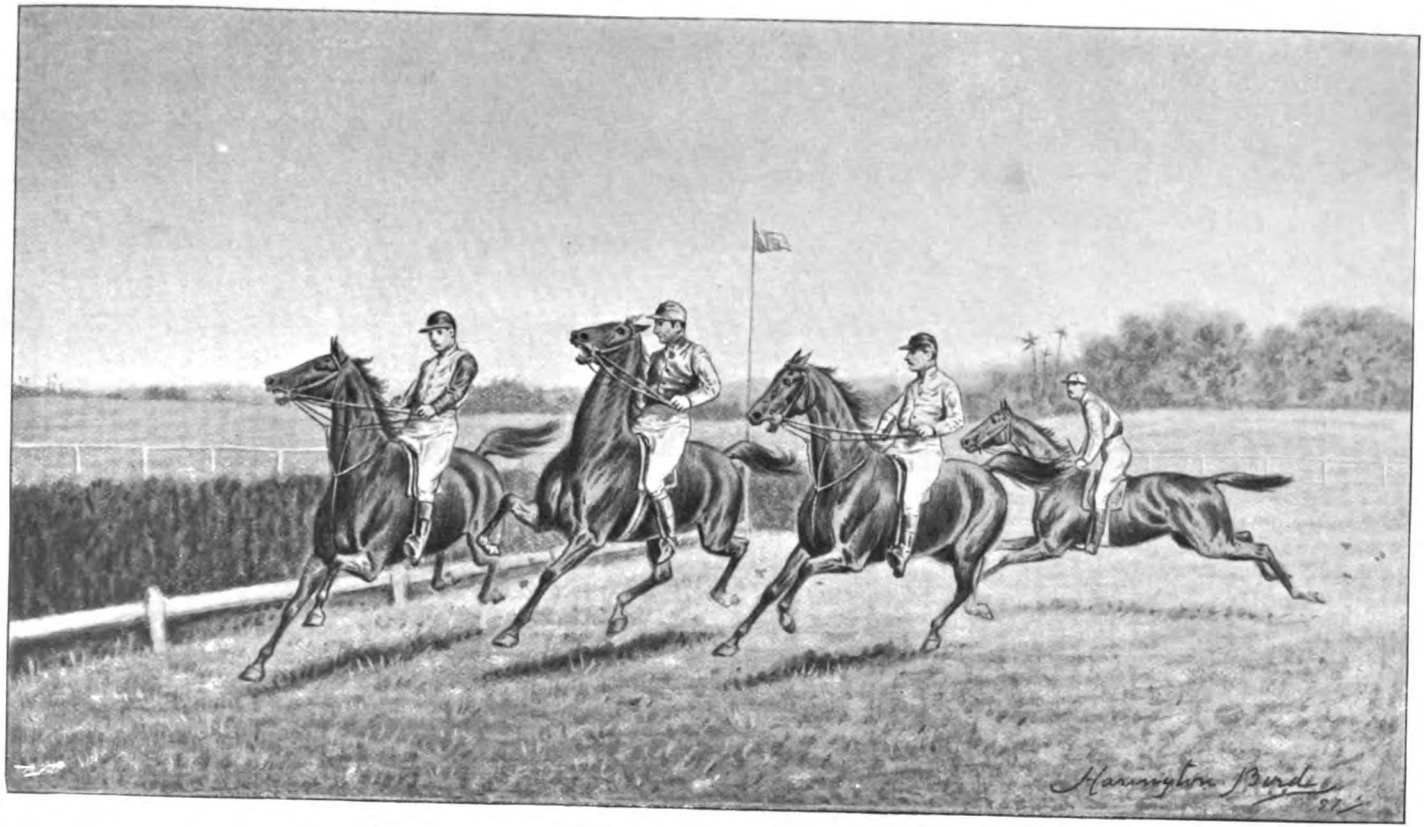
While discussing steeplechasing Godower said, 'Of all the meetings in which we have taken part I think Dowlutpore stands quite by itself. Do you recollect your ride on "King of the

Valley," Colonel, when I was on "Empress"?' 'Shall I ever forget it?' I replied. It was one of my riding recollections that I think I may consider unique, and it is the account of this event which Godower recalled to memory that I propose to give my readers. It occurred many years ago, and of all that took part in it I believe he and I are the only survivors.

Before starting my narrative I may mention that I am, or rather was in younger days in the far-away East, a riding man. In India—at least, at that time—nearly everyone who was not prevented by a wife, large pay and allowances, or obesity, was a riding man to a greater or less degree; generally the latter. But the riding man *par excellence* was the individual whose weight nature had restricted to 9 st. (reducible to 8 st. 10 lb.), imparting to him at the same time a love of horses and all connected with them, and also a good idea of stable management. By the way, on reflection, I think the aforesaid description is almost equally applicable to the riding man of the present.

Well, such was my case. It involved at all times innumerable offers of mounts on their horses from my friends 'just to give him a bit of schooling,' or a gallop 'to see what you think of him—how he shapes up;' often adding 'he may be a bit fresh.' This last precaution I soon got to know and to understand what it probably meant; the animal often proving a vicious buck-jumping Waler that was a little fresh from no man having remained long enough on his back to take it out of him! 'But to a chap like yourself—who is a real horseman, you know—of course a ride of this sort must be perfect enjoyment'! This also was the opinion of a lady friend who insisted on my riding her fat Gulf horse 'Bijou' (aged eighteen) for the 'Ladies' Bracelet,' which she fondly expected I was to win, although three or four smart Arabs were running against him. You may imagine what my feelings were when the flag dropped and 'Bijou' began to curvet and amble! I need hardly say we *did not* win the bracelet, but I am quite sure that I altogether fell in her estimation, and that she thought nothing of me as a horseman subsequently. However, I had for many a long day to stick to my *rôle*. No big pay and allowances or obesity or matrimony came to enable me to make excuse and claim exemption from being any longer a riding-man.

It thereupon followed, quite as a matter of course, that I received an invitation from my friend Simkin, who had been my guest at our Station Race Meeting at Fusserabad, to go and stay



JACK-O'-LANTERN SWERVED CLEAN ACROSS, CARRYING THE OTHER TWO OUT WITH HIM

with him for their races at Dowlutpore. He added, as a further attraction to his invitation, that he would get me lots of good mounts; among them would be one on his own horse for the 'Grand Vale Steeplechase.'

It was the period when railways had not found their way any distance up-country, so Simkin concluded his letter with explanations as to my trip, promising he would arrange to have horses laid for me to ride in the last forty miles.

Getting the requisite leave from the brigadier, I went off in great glee. There was no hitch in the arrangements for my journey, and I found five capital nags laid to bring me on the last stages to Dowlutpore, where I arrived on the eve of the races, and was hospitably welcomed by Simkin and his wife. I must say Simkin had been as good as his word in getting me some mounts; as on the first day I won the Derby, a good race, by half a length, and the Galloway Plate after an exciting struggle by a neck—two most enjoyable rides.

The Grand Vale Steeplechase was fixed for the second day, and as we returned from the course it occurred to me to ask Simkin to let me have a look at the animal I was to steer therein. Imagine my dismay when I was introduced to a weedy-looking, mealy bay countrybred, about fifteen hands, showing about as much breeding as a bullock; and this was the thing I was to ride against three others, one of which I knew to be 'Empress,' the crack chaser of that part of the country! However, I thought perhaps he might have some merits which were not superficially apparent, so said nothing, but made up my mind to take my chance, only asking his name. 'Oh!' said Simkin, 'we call him "The Snoozer," but he's entered in the 'chase to-morrow as "King of the Valley"!' It was not a cheering outlook. I mentally depicted myself struggling along hopelessly on 'King of the Valley'—known probably to every soul present as 'The Snoozer'—while 'Empress' was sailing away at her ease with Godower on her back; for he had told me with great delight that afternoon that he had the mount.

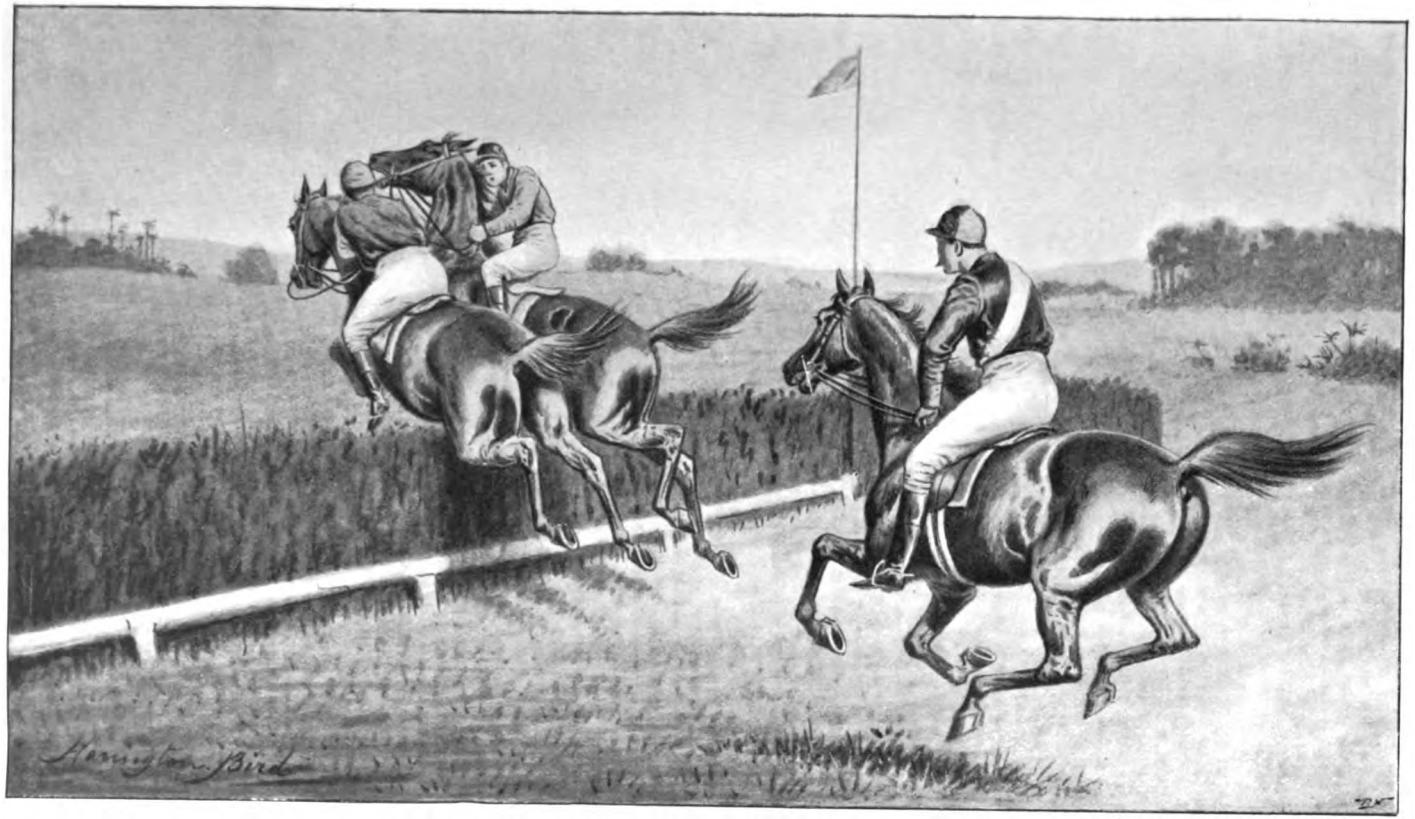
The more I pondered over it the less I liked my prospective ride; and as we sat down to dinner I suggested to my host that, as he knew the horse, he had much better ride himself. Upon which he replied, 'I would have done so a couple of years ago, old chap, but since I've been married, my wife won't let me ride over jumps; besides, I've got too heavy to ride the weight, and am not fit!' Well, there was no way out of it. Mrs. Simkin said, with her sweetest smile, 'Oh! I hope you'll ride for us, my dear Colonel;

I have been so hard at work on your jacket and cap, I am sure you'll think them so pretty: violet with white belt and quartered cap—that's the correct description, isn't it?'

After dinner they were duly produced and admired. Mrs. Simkin had spared neither trouble nor expense; they were of rich corded silk, made, she assured me, after a good English pattern. As I gazed at them I reflected sadly that their life (subject to the 'King's' performances) would be such a short one.

Simkin had already put some money on his horse at long odds, and offered to let me stand in halves or quarters, whichever I preferred; but I thought the risk I was about to undergo corporeally was sufficient, without yielding to the fascination of backing my mount.

My host promised that, as next day was a non-racing one, he would show me round the course in the morning, which he accordingly did. It had come on to rain during the night, and was raining as we rode up to the ground, which made the scene additionally dispiriting, the general aspect of the course being anything but cheering. It was about two and a half miles over fields, some ploughed and others with standing corn. There was the usual variety of fences, hedges, post and rails, water and an Irish bank, which were fit to extend an English hunter; and I had to negotiate them on the brute I have described. The chief item was (as it generally is) the water jump, which, instead of being as usual in front of the stand, was, owing to a friendly nullah being utilised, in one of the aforesaid fields. There was no make-believe about the obstacle; it was 13 ft. from bank to bank with a 3-ft. hedge on the take-off side, quite full of water, the stream having been dammed up on purpose, and was, I am sure, quite 5 ft. deep. Simkin seemed to look upon it as a beautiful jump, being, as he said, 'such a perfectly natural fence.' When I asked him whether any of the artists who had planned and laid out the course were going to ride, I was scarcely astonished to hear him reply they were not; each one having some good reason for excusing himself, my host heading them with his matrimonial plea of the previous evening. The rain continued that day and part of next night, making the going deep and sticky. It was suggested to put off the race, but to this the owners of two of the horses engaged would not agree. There was the usual big lottery on the event, and Simkin had bought his for five rupees, which did not look as if his chance was much fancied by the Dowlutpore public. He said to me that I *must* have *some* interest in the race, so he had



'THE LAIRD' AND 'JACK' COLLIDED

put down half to me. I did not feel grateful, but agreed to let it stand.

He also told me he had taken odds about three separate events: first, that the 'King' would lead over the first fence; second, that 'Empress' would fall; third, that 'King of the Valley' would win.

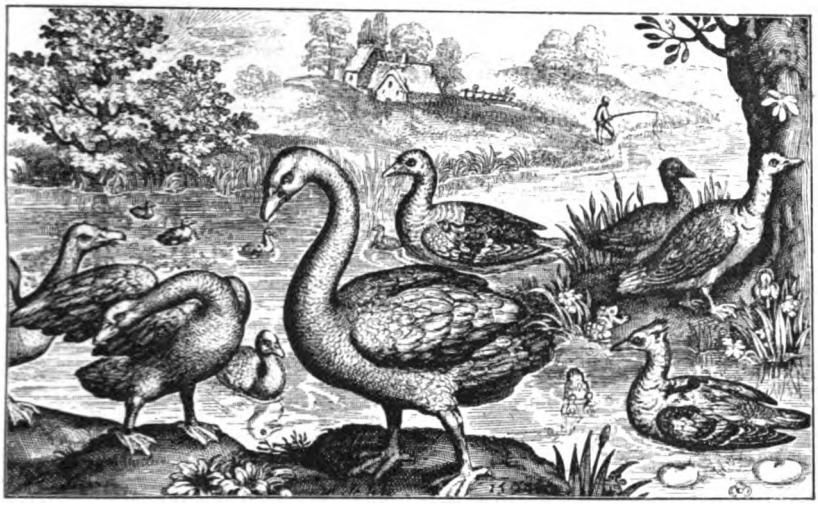
There were, as I have said, two others besides the 'King' and 'Empress,' both Arabs—'Jack-o'-Lantern' and 'The Laird,' neither of whom bore a very high repute; the former was considered fast, but an uncertain fencer, and a terrific puller.

We got off at the first attempt to a good start. My orders being to do my best to pull off bet No. 1, I tried at once for the lead, but found I was utterly outpaced. The others neared the first fence almost in line, when 'Jack-o'-Lantern,' who was on the right, swerved clean across, carrying the other two out with him, thus enabling me to come up and get over, which I did with a scramble, thus landing the first bet. Godower, however, though he had lost a lot of ground, was able soon to pull up and repass me, with the other two in attendance. He seemed determined 'Empress' should be in front for the rest of the journey, and sent her along in earnest, so that at the post and rails, when trying to steady herself for the take-off, she slipped on the wet ground and turned right over the rails, knocking her rider out of time, and taking no further part in the race; thus winning for Simkin his second bet. Luckily for me, in her fall she smashed two of the rails, thus enabling me to slip through, for I am sure I should never have got over otherwise. At the next fence but one 'The Laird' and 'Jack' collided and both came down, the former laming himself badly, the latter getting rid of his bridle and galloping home to his stable. I then went on alone, crashed through the hedge, plump into the water, where as usual a large crowd had collected, so that there was no lack of willing hands to extricate us, which was done after some difficulty. I remounted in sorry plight, soaked from head to foot, my mouth full of mud and water, and started again, a shower of blows falling on the horse's quarters as we set off.

I got two more falls and scrambled *somehow* through the rest of the fences. At last I reached the winning post bruised, battered, and bleeding, with clothes torn to pieces. The first thing I did on pulling up was to be extremely sick, which greatly alarmed Simkin, who feared I would never be able to draw my weight at the scales, where, however, I received the requisite 'All right, weight,' and thus won Simkin the Grand Vale Steeplechase,

together with his bets; though I fear the violet and white jacket and cap never did duty again. My half of the lottery amounted to a little over 1,000 rupees, which was some solatium for my cuts and bruises.

Simkin duly presented me with a handsome whip, on which were engraved the name and date of the race, and also that of 'King of the Valley,' who, by the way, resumed his former life as 'The Snoozer,' and I can confidently assert never risked the laurels he had gained by again trying his luck over a country, being reserved for what Mr. Jorrocks terms 'Distinction in the minor fields of 'oss enterprise.'



SHORE-BIRDS IN WINTER

BY A. S. BUCKLE

ALIKE to sportsman and naturalist the study of the birds to be found 'alongshore' is most fascinating, and never more so than during the winter, when our coasts are peopled by a host of feathered visitors from the frozen North. All along the beach, wherever they can find good feeding-ground, the birds are dispersed in greater or less numbers; but if the reader will, in imagination, accompany me on a fine winter day to a certain spot on our East coast—not so very far from London—we may, if we choose the right time, see gathered together for a brief space most of the birds of the shore for miles each way.

If we think of sport we shall want a close-shooting, powerful gun of some kind; for if we do manage to get a few shots, they will most certainly be at long range. But if the sportsman be not made happy by a heavy bag hardly earned, the naturalist part of his nature—and what true sportsman is not also a naturalist?—will be gratified by most interesting sights and sounds of bird life. In any case we must have a good pair of field-glasses.

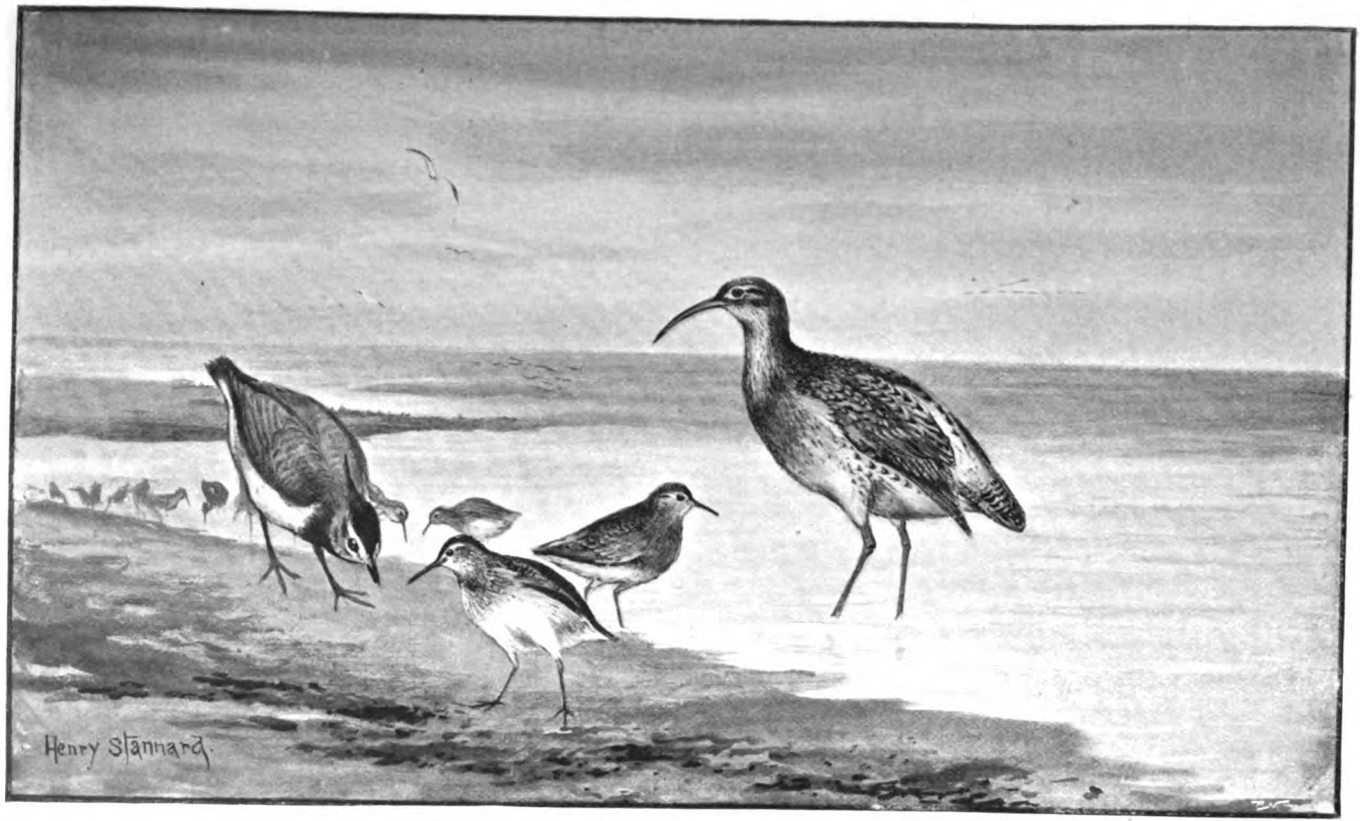
It would be difficult to imagine a more dreary and, to the eye of one not interested in the birds, a more desolate scene. We are

standing behind a bank of earth, grown over with rough grass, a rampart to keep the sea from flowing where it once did over the now reclaimed farm-land behind us. In that direction the fields of heavy brown ploughed land, divided from each other by long straight ditches in which the water gleams under the wintry sun, stretch for a mile with not a tree and scarcely a bush. Then the big barns and square brick farmhouse rise in a group; and behind these again is the sea-wall, which, stretching away to our right and left from where we stand, curves inland and surrounds the whole farm. For we are on an island of some 500 acres, encircled on every hand either by the open sea to the east, or by deep tidal creeks, whose course we see marked here and there by the masts of the watch-boats at the oyster-beds, or by the sails of a big topsail barge creeping up to her destination on the flood tide. To the west—inland—and north are other like islands; but all are absolutely flat, and the tall farm-buildings on each, with a few stunted trees, are all we can see of the others. Perhaps it is not too hazy to note dimly in the distance, beyond the sea-walls and the masts, the rising ground of the mainland with hedgerows defined by long lines of hideously trimmed elm-trees.

A dreary scene enough, but with a certain picturesqueness, and even at times beauty, of its own—a beauty perhaps chiefly derived from the sky, which seems to cover all like a vast dome. Nowhere, except at sea and on flats like these, does one see such magnificent effects of cloud and sky.

But let us turn our eyes seaward over the 'wall,' for there at present lies our chief interest. Noticing as we turn that the level of the strange country behind us is much *lower* than that of the high-water mark on the other side, we see immediately in front of us a stretch of saltings, or marshy ground covered at high tide, overgrown with coarse salt herbage, and intersected by a maze of oozy channels; beyond the saltings comes a vast expanse of mud and sand, so vast that it stretches away apparently without limit into the haze—here at low water it is some three miles to the water's edge! But it is not low water now, for as we look we can see the line of 'cruel crawling foam' coming across the sands; and now through the glasses we begin to see some of the birds we are looking for, busy feeding along the edge of the tide, but ever drawing nearer to us as they retreat before its swift advance.

Soon it will be understood why this spot is so favourable for the observation of shore-birds. Just in front of us the mud, in which all these long-legged and long-billed wading birds find



BUSY FEEDING ALONG THE EDGE OF THE TIDE

their food, is higher than anywhere else along the coast for miles —the spot is locally known as the 'High Sands'—consequently all the waders congregate here as the tide covers the rest of the sands, in order to lose as little time as possible out of the day's work of finding food.

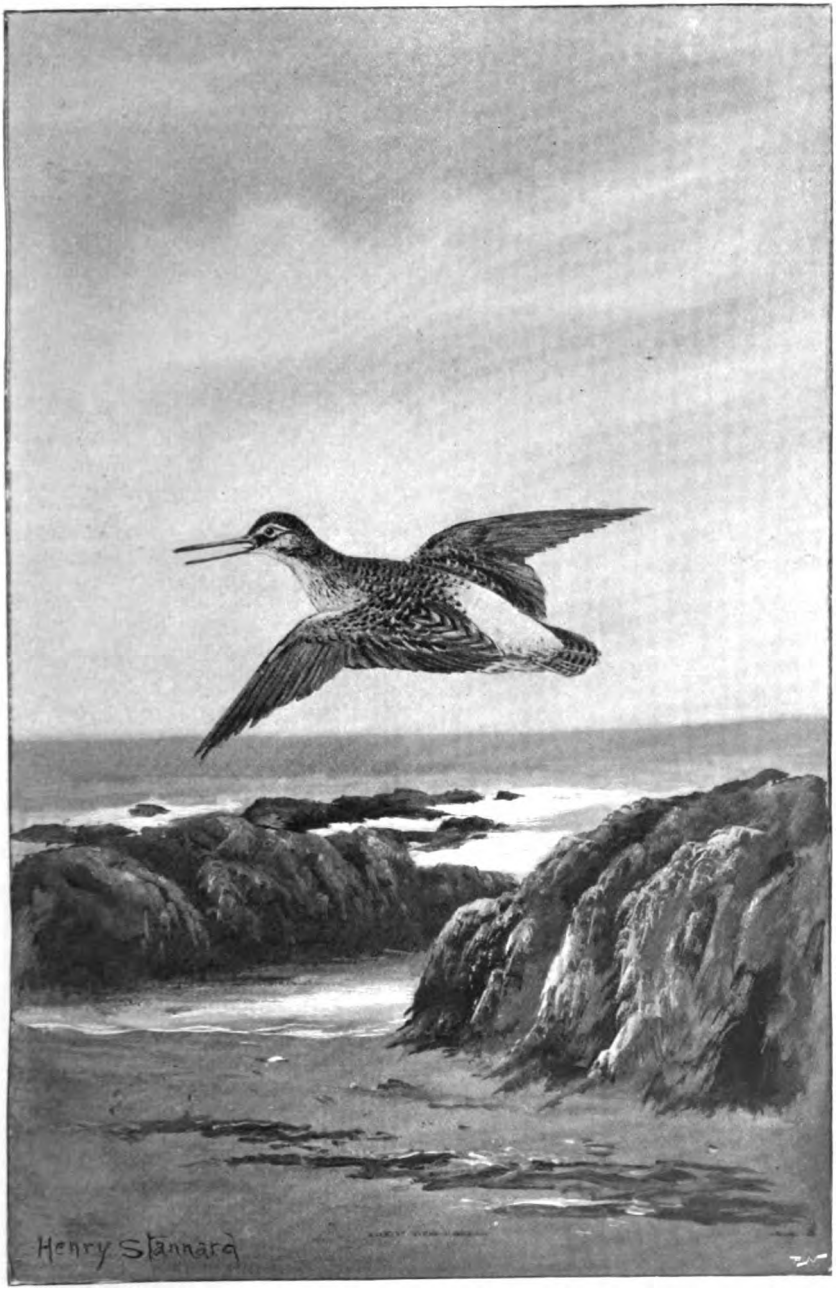
As the water advances, the line of birds along its edge in front of us grows ever more numerous, for both from right and left more birds come flying in large and small parties. Those of large birds, moving steadily forward in a formation like an irregular 'V,' point foremost, are curlews, whose wild 'cur-r-r-lee' can now be heard, as well as the long, liquid, tremulous whistle they make use of in their more confidential moments. Then there come clouds of much smaller birds, dashing along at a great pace; now in a dense phalanx, now stringing out in a long line close to the surface of the water, and again bunching together and shooting suddenly upwards; the whole 'fling'—to use the fowler's word—manœuvring together with the utmost precision, as though by word of command. They are oxbirds, as the East-coast fowlers call them—mostly dunlins, with sometimes a few of the other small waders—scarcely as big as larks, but with long pointed wings which drive them onwards at tremendous speed. Alongside them fly some larger birds, singly, or in parties of three or four, also with long pointed wings. These are grey plovers, the likenesses in silver of our inland golden plovers, whose summer home is on the tundras of Siberia, and whose melancholy whistle makes a music that well fits the wild scene. All, as they come abreast of the 'High Sands,' wheel round into the wind and settle, with wings upstretched, in the ever-growing crowd at the water's edge.

Swiftly the tide drives forward, filling up the creek to the right and spreading over the sands, until it laps the foot of the 'wall' beyond the creek and the edge of the strip of saltings to our left; but the 'High Sands' are still uncovered, and here the birds are collected—a wonderful sight! Their numbers are now complete, the last hurrying parties of laggards have come in from their feeding grounds, perhaps miles away, now covered by the relentless tide. There must be hundreds of curlews and thousands of oxbirds, huddled together almost as closely as they can stand, in a brown mass, looking from our position like a long serried line of heads. And what a babel of sounds comes from the crowd! The rippling notes of the curlews, the plaintive whistle of the plovers, the short husky cries of the oxbirds, all blend together into a confused volume of chattering sounds. It

is useless to think of getting a shot 'into the brown,' tempting though it looks—they are far out of range, too wary to trust themselves within gunshot of the treacherous, man-sheltering sea-wall; perhaps in a punt on a moonlight night we might come to terms with them from the water. And soon we may get a chance of some shots as they 'flight' over the 'wall,' for already the tiny oxbirds have been forced off their legs by the rising water, and get up in one tremendous cloud that, from a mile off, looks like a vast column of smoke. To and fro they wheel, now rising, now falling, now speading across the sky, now contracting their ranks into a dense mass; now, as they whirl along, exposing their white undersides, and turning the cloud for a moment from one of smoke into one of silvery spray. One more turn and they speed inland, lengthening out into a column that drives high overhead with a roar, the tearing of the air by thousands of small but swiftly-moving wings. The column quickly disperses over the fields, where, until the sands are once more bared by the ebbing tide, the birds find not only rest but food.

A few quick notes sound overhead, and a small flight of birds like golden plovers, but with long bills, sweeps inland. We have been so keenly watching the manœuvres of the oxbirds over the fields that we missed seeing these until too late for a shot. A native of these parts would call them 'preen'—they are godwits, a few of which seem to stay here all the winter, though at the time of the autumn and spring migrations their numbers are most considerable. After this warning we keep our eyes seawards, where the curlews are now, literally, 'on their last legs.' They look almost as if they were floating in a compact line on the water, instead of standing as they are on the highest patch of the 'High Sands.' Now they, too, are up; rising high in the air, in regular ranks they press on to rejoin in the fields their late companions on the mud. Smoothly the tide flows—bare of life now, except for a few gulls drifting on the surface or lazily winging to and fro—covering even the saltings and lapping the sea-wall; for this is a spring tide, the neaps hardly come within half a mile of the 'wall' at this spot.

For an hour we shall see no birds but the gulls, of the black-headed species mostly, with here and there a common or a herring gull, and shall hear nothing but their harsh cries. Very likely a 'cob,' or great black-backed gull, will pass far out, majestically flapping his long wings, his sonorous croak resounding across the water. But as soon as the highest mud is once more exposed by the ebb, with marvellous instinct the waders come thronging



THESE CREEKS ARE THE FAVOURITE HAUNT OF THE REDSHANKS

back, and the scene we have just witnessed on the flood will be repeated, with the order of events reversed. But the vast flights we then saw pass inland have scattered in the meantime on the fields, and the return flight is in smaller parties; however, the crowd on the 'High Sands' is just the same, until it disperses once more to left and right along the coast.

Even more interesting, especially to the fowler, is the same spot, under the same conditions of tide, if we have the good fortune to be there in hard weather. Then the mud and sand are covered with acres of broken ice, torn up by the tide from the hollows in the mud where the water lay and froze, and piled up in a chaos of dirty white floes. Close in shore, the masses of ice and frozen foam have been gathered into miniature icebergs, contorted in all manner of curious angular shapes, and stranded in the little creeks and bays of the saltings. The ice is covered with birds, sitting dejectedly on the floes, or searching restlessly and clamorously in the open spaces for what little food the frozen mud may yield. Not waders only, but all kinds of frozen-out land-birds, too,—rooks, starlings, peewits, larks—are there, and the crows and gulls, holding high revel over the meagre carcases of those who have already fallen victims to cold and hunger. The rising tide will not drive many of the waders away to the iron-bound land now; they crowd on the ice, anxiously awaiting the first of the ebb, when they may begin the search for any 'pickings' the tide may have brought them. And farther out is nobler game; in some open space of water ruffled by the bitter north-easter, the bobbing heads and necks of a company of widgeon, driven in by stress of hunger from their usual daylight haunts at sea; a skein of brent geese, too, wheeling about before they settle, to ride the waves until they can once more seek a spot where their beloved sea-grass is not covered with ice. Farther out still, the majestic figures of a dozen swans flap their slow-beating wings in single file over the surface of the dark waters. Fine times these for the fowler, truly, but not for the fowl!

But such days seldom come in our land of mild winters; let us return to the day of our first description. The short afternoon is drawing on, and there is a long distance to go before we get home. Our way lies along the 'wall' to where the boat is lying in the creek to the north. Our boatman is a fine specimen of the men of this marshland; tall and stalwart, with fair beard, bronzed face, and keen blue eyes that rival in their powers of vision those of a hawk. His daily bread is earned ashore, but, like all the dwellers round these creeks and on these islands, he

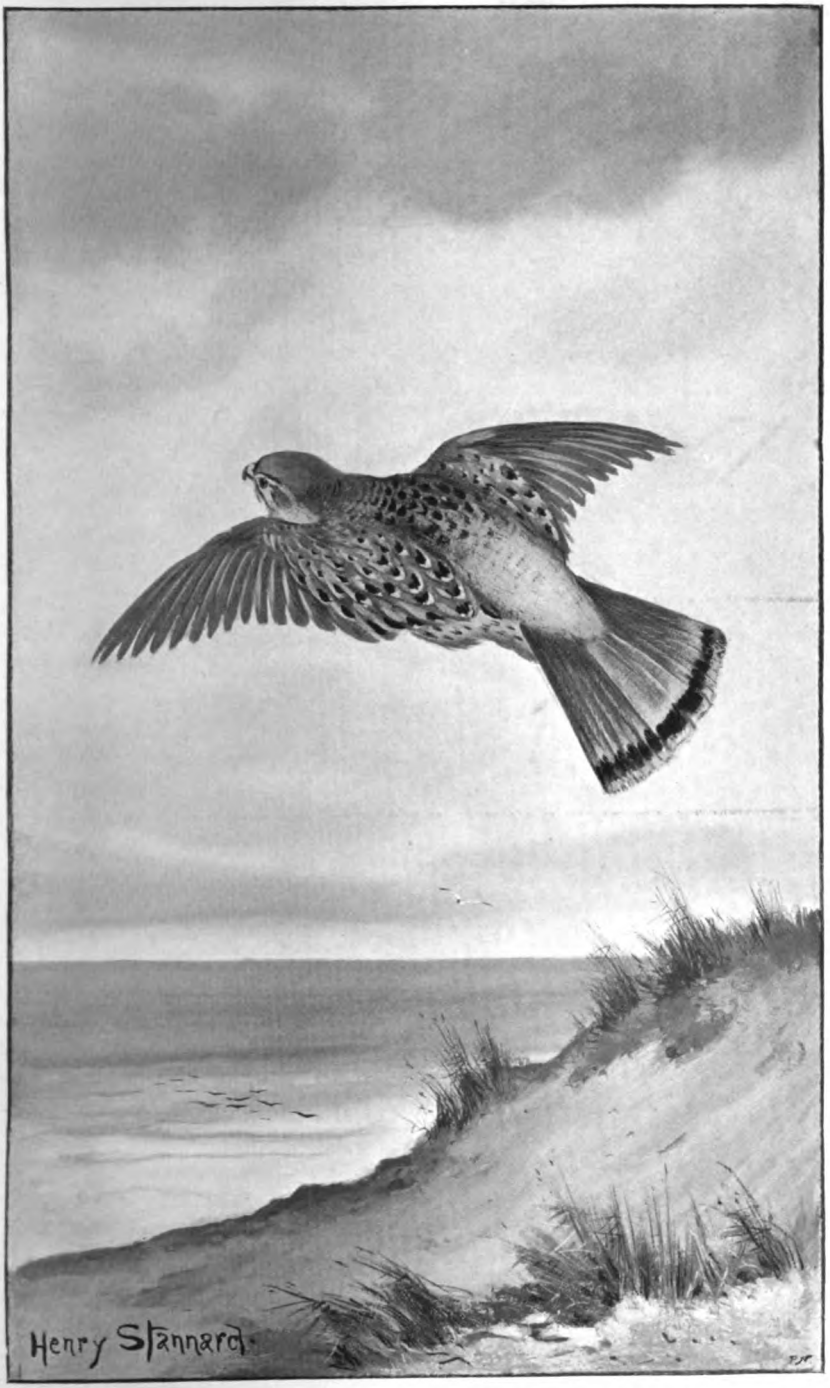
is a first-class waterman. Though, perhaps, he cannot read much, nor write at all, he is full of common sense and useful local knowledge, and is endowed with a keen sense of humour. But, above all, he is a true sportsman, toiling cheerfully for hours with oar or setting-pole to give one the chance of a shot or two, and enjoying the day even if, as very often happened, the bag was almost empty.

Afloat in the creek, his brawny arms take us swiftly along the channel, which now, after a couple of hours' ebb, winds between high banks of ooze sloping up to a strip of saltings that runs along the outside of the 'walls' on either hand. These 'walls' form the boundary of our view; besides the winding waterway and the oozy banks we can see nothing but the sky, and we feel a peculiar sense of loneliness. This must have oppressed the boatman one day; for, rowing along this very creek, he suddenly said, 'There's a good many as don't know where *we* are!'—which seemed to me rather a humorous and also an expressive way of putting it.

These creeks are the favourite haunt of the redshanks, whose graceful forms are seen along the water's edge at every turn; and their sweet plaintive whistle sounds in the distance, changing, as we approach, to loud shrieks of alarm and a vision of swiftly darting, variegated plumage. Very pretty shots they sometimes give as they dash back past the boat; but they are annoying birds to the fowler, as their wild alarm-notes scare up more valuable fowl that might otherwise have been approached with success. For this reason they are the pet aversion of our boatman—he calls them 'tooks'—who says they scream, 'Kill me, kill me!' and growls out, 'We'll give yer some "Kill me," too, if yer come anigh us!'

Small trips of oxbirds line the edge of the mud, or flit by us continually. The saltings on either side of the creek swarm with larks; meadow-pipits, too, are there in numbers, and in and out of the rills trip the darker rock-pipits. A sentinel rook is sitting on one of the fences that keep the sheep from straying along the 'wall,' and from the fields on the other side of it comes the note of a peewit, while overhead a kestrel is almost sure to be seen hanging in the air.

Stray curlews are very fond of feeding in the channels and pools of the saltings along the creeks. Up jumps one with a yell, and away, too far for the 12-bore, but if the long single 4 can be swung up quickly enough, he may yet be crumpled up by a dose of No. 1 shot before he can hurry away out of sight



A KESTREL IS ALMOST SURE TO BE SEEN HANGING IN THE AIR

over the sea-wall. If the inland waters were closed by frost we might also come, round some corner, upon a duck or two.

On we glide round bend after bend of the creek, past the watch-boats and oyster-dredgers' smacks whose masts we saw before, past where the slender sticks, quivering in the tide-stream, mark the oyster-beds as ground sacred against anchor or setting-pole, into a wider creek, where we have now to stem the tide, which here ebbs *away* from the open sands to join the sea again by an estuary many miles off. Slowly the sunset colours, which fill the vast dome above us and light up the water ahead, darken and fade; the stars begin to show, and the air to feel sharp and frosty. Half a dozen ducks pass over high up, bound inland to one of the 'fleets'—reed-bordered pieces of water—which wind among the fields on all these islands and marshes. If permission has been obtained, it is worth while to land at sunset and wait by one of these 'fleets' for the chance of a shot at ducks flighting in from the sea.

At last we reach our haven; the boat is made snug, and we wade ashore up the bank of ooze. As we stumble along in the dusk in single file on our way home along the narrow top of the 'wall,' the wail of the redshanks away in the creek is the last we hear of the birds of the shore.

TURTLE

BY REAR-ADMIRAL C. C. P. FITZGERALD

READING lately a very interesting article in the 'Nineteenth Century' on Tarpon fishing reminded me of another form of sport which I have enjoyed in the Gulf of Mexico.

Spearing turtle on the reefs does not at first strike one as likely to be a very exciting sport, and I would not for one moment attempt to compare it to the capture of the 'Silver king;' but yet it partakes largely of the 'glorious uncertainty of sport:' it is not at all so easy as it sounds, and the large green turtle in his native element is by no means the tame and docile creature that we see lying on his back gasping in the window of a London restaurant. Moreover, it must always be a satisfaction to a true sportsman to know that his game when killed is not absolutely useless, and need not be thrown to the sharks as offal. The flesh of the green turtles of the Gulf of Mexico is excellent, and they are in far better condition when killed out there than they ever are when in England. The extensive coral reefs which fringe the shores of the south-eastern corner of the great Mexican Gulf are our hunting-grounds: it is here that the turtle lie asleep, with one eye open, on the bottom, in about four feet of water, and they must be approached with the greatest caution, or

they will be off before you can get within striking distance of them.

We never could find out where these turtle landed to lay their eggs; the reefs on which they dwelt were often without any islets attached to them, and there were no marks of them upon the shores of the mainland, where there was generally a heavy surf. If we could have found their shore walks we should probably have tried our luck at turning them at night, after the manner of the Ascension turtlers; though it would scarcely have been lively work, and certainly not such good sport as spearing them in their native element. Spearing, also, was the only effectual way of capturing them: we caught one occasionally when hauling the seine net on the beach, but not more than two or three during the whole time we were down the Gulf; whereas when spearing on the reefs we got as many as five in one day.

The great object in spearing turtle is to capture them alive and uninjured, so that they can be kept like sheep or bullocks until they are wanted for use; this sounds rather inconsistent with the term 'spearing,' but it is not so, as I shall explain.

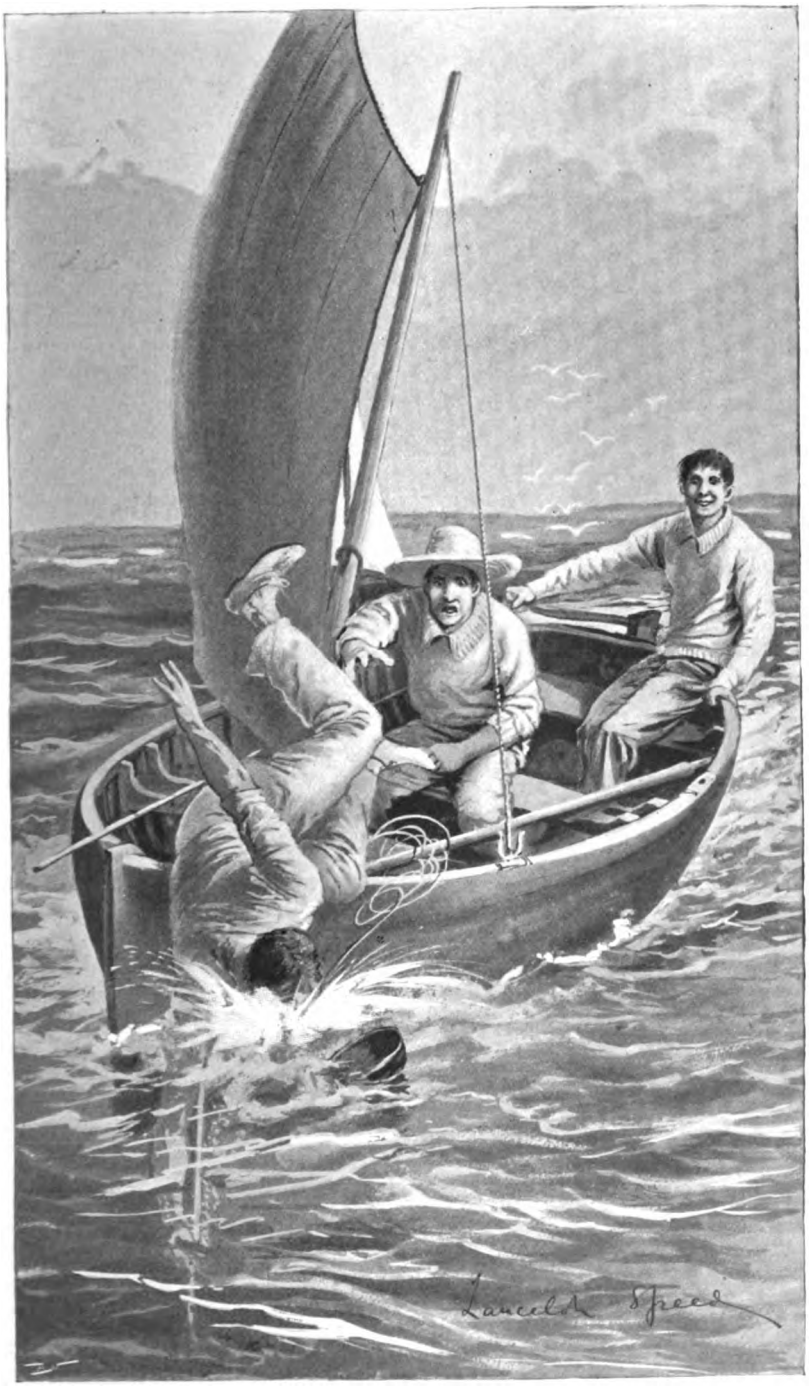
We got our first idea of the necessary gear and method of spearing turtle from some natives on the coast of the Yucatan peninsula; but we had greatly to modify their plant before we succeeded in capturing our turtle uninjured, and in a condition to keep as long as we wanted. Their spear-point was too long, it almost invariably penetrated the shell, and entering the lungs, caused the turtle to bleed to death in from twenty-four to forty-eight hours.

Our object was to make a spear-point which should have sufficient hold in the back shell without complete penetration, and this we at last succeeded in doing. The point is three-cornered, and about three-quarters of an inch long; the part that fits into the haft is square, and may be any convenient length; the shoulders answer the double purpose of preventing the point from penetrating too far and also of forming a hold for the line, which consists of 120 yards of specially strong water-line, about the size of an ordinary lead pencil, spliced round the spear as tightly as possible between the shoulders. The haft is an ash staff about nine feet long, with a metal socket to take the back end of the spear, which must fit loosely so as to pull out directly the turtle is struck. We found that the best plan was to fit it so as to be quite loose in the socket, and then to tighten it sufficiently to prevent it

from falling out by wrapping a scrap of wet paper round it. It is of the first importance that the long wooden haft of the spear should be drawn clear of the point the instant the turtle is struck: if this is not done, the leverage of the haft will turn the spear-point in the hole made in the turtle's shell, and it will thus be loosened, so that it will either fall out of itself or else come out directly any strain is brought upon it. This knack of drawing back the long handle of the spear smartly is not very easy to acquire; the depth of water cannot always be accurately measured by the eye; the position of the harpooneer—in the bows of a small boat bobbing about under sail—is not a very steady one, and in the excitement of the moment a mistake is easily made, with the result that the turtle is sure to be lost. The spear is not thrown after the manner of an ordinary harpoon or fish-spear; it is thrust down at the turtle with the greatest amount of strength that the man using it is capable of exerting; for the shell of the turtle is hard, and the resistance of the water takes off from the force of the blow. Not infrequently the harpooneer misses his quarry, loses his balance, and takes a header overboard; and this is specially liable to happen if he miscalculates the depth of the turtle, and thinks he is a little nearer than is really the case.

The fit-out for turtling on the reefs is as follows: A small boat about fifteen feet long, fairly light and handy, but with a good flat floor; rig, a small sprit-sail without a jib; the turtle-spear; 120 yards of line spliced on to the spear-point, with a wooden buoy or bladder attached to the other end; a pair of sculls; a crew of three and no more. The object of the buoy is this: If the turtle, after being struck, makes a very vigorous and prolonged rush, he sometimes takes out the whole of the 120 yards of line before the boat's head can be turned in the right direction and way got upon her; if the line were checked it would break, or the spear-point would be drawn out of the shell: the buoy is therefore thrown overboard, and the boat chases it till she picks it up again, as the turtle is sure to stop sooner or later in his wild career.

It is essential that there should be a breeze, and that the boat should be under sail. We often tried to catch turtle in a calm, by rowing with muffled oars, and sometimes by poling with a long pole; but we were never able to get within striking distance of them. The water was very clear, and without a good ripple they could see the boat a long way off, and were too wary to be caught like that; so that latterly we never went turtling unless there



NOT INFREQUENTLY THE HARPOONEER MISSES HIS QUARRY, AND TAKES A HEADER OVERBOARD

was a breeze, and this there almost always was in the afternoon, even if the mornings were calm.

The depth of water on these coral reefs varies from two to about five feet: in some places it is deeper, but such places we avoided, as five feet is about the extreme depth at which one has any chance of properly spearing a turtle when he is lying on the bottom. I assume the reader is aware that turtle breathe with lungs, like animals (though I believe they are classed as reptiles); consequently they must come to the surface occasionally, and by lying in the shallow waters of these coral reefs they are able to take matters very easy: about once every hour they put their heads above water, take a long breath, which sounds like a deep sigh, and go down again to lie perfectly still on the bottom.

Let us now proceed to business. Jack stands in the bow with the spear. Tom sits in the middle of the boat ready to strike mast and sail and get the oars out the moment a turtle is struck: and Harry sits in the stern and steers. I have already described the little boat and her rig, and now we are sailing along, close-hauled, with a light breeze, and making about one mile an hour through the water. The sun is shining brightly, but there is a good ripple on the sea, so it is possible to approach a turtle within striking distance before we are observed; and although cloudy weather is superior in some respects, a bright day is better for sighting your turtle, and making sure that he *is* a turtle and not a large piece of brain-coral; for the latter—with which the reefs are thickly strewn—is not infrequently harpooned in mistake for a turtle, to the disgust of the harpooneer, and the damage of the spear.

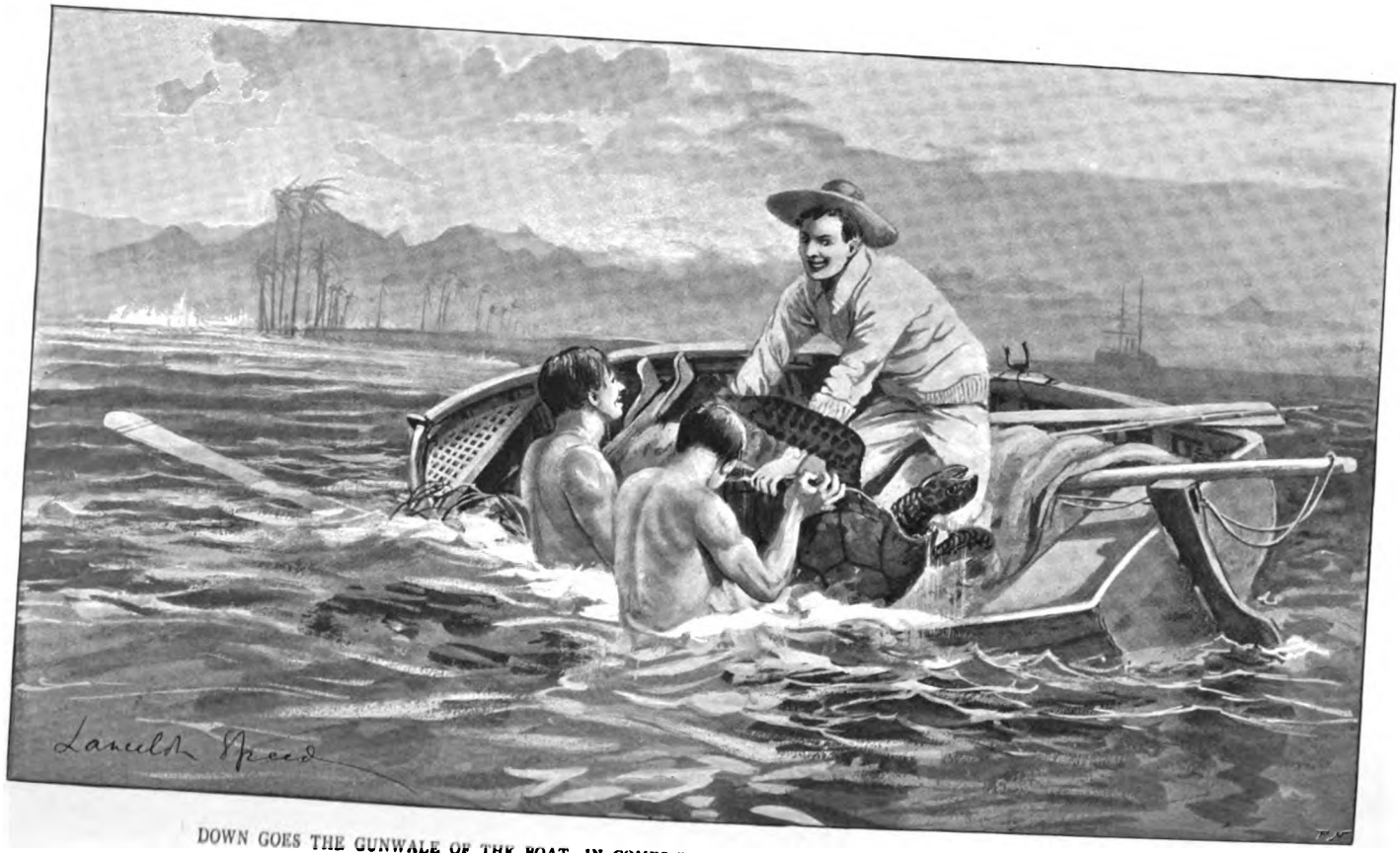
Now a turtle is sighted about twenty yards off on the weather bow, and Jack waves his hand to Harry, as a signal to him to luff all he knows; but the little boat will not stand close sailing, and she falls off and passes to leeward of the turtle outside striking distance, but without disturbing him. So then we try to tack; the boat, however, with her one sail and no jib, will not come round without the assistance of an oar, so Tom gets an oar out, but in doing so he makes a noise and splashes; this frightens the turtle, and he is off directly.

Once more we sail along, close-hauled as before, and all three keeping a sharp look-out. Now a turtle is sighted broad off on the lee bow; the boat is kept off for him, she gathers way quickly, and by the time we get over him she is going fast through the water, so that the shot is a very difficult one; the harpooneer strikes, and strikes well home, but he fails to draw

back the haft quickly enough, so the spear-point turns a little, falls out, and the turtle escapes. Failure number two, but at it again! Once more a turtle is sighted off the lee bow, and this time Harry the helmsman, instead of keeping away straight for the turtle, keeps hard away and runs before the wind for three or four boat's-lengths, then hauls up and approaches the game close-hauled, and with but little way on the boat. This time Jack the harpooneer does his duty, strikes home, draws back the haft smartly, and lays it down, attends to his line, which is coiled down clear between his feet, and off rushes the turtle like an express engine; out flies the line, burning Jack's fingers; down comes the mast and sail in a jiffy—'Out oars, Tom, and give way like a galley slave!' Now we have got the boat's head pointed in the right direction—that is to say, straight for the turtle; Tom has got good way on her with his oars, and Jack can begin to put a little strain on the line and make the turtle tow the boat, an operation which will very soon exhaust him. His first rush takes us about two hundred yards, then he eases off a bit, comes up to the top and blows, and makes off again for his second rush, which is considerably shorter and not so fast as the first one. In about a quarter of an hour or twenty minutes, if he is not a very big and exceptionally lusty turtle, he is utterly blown—pumped out like a fat man running up-hill; he allows the boat to haul right up to him and just flaps about helplessly on the top of the water.

Now begins the second act of the drama; he has to be turned on his back and dragged into the boat. As soon as it is quite certain that he is played out, that there is no fear of another rush, and the depth of water not more than about up to a man's chin, Tom goes overboard and proceeds to 'turn turtle.'

This second act is not without some interest and excitement, and the man or boy (it was generally one of the midshipmen) who performs it must be tolerably amphibious; for the turtle, though played out to a certain extent, and not capable of making a prolonged rush, still retains a very strong objection to be turned over on his back, and shows fight till the last, hitting out with his flippers, and not infrequently giving his assailant a black eye or a bloody nose. However, a British midshipman is not to be beaten by a mere turtle, and sooner or later, after a good deal of splashing and floundering, the latter is turned in the opposite way from that in which nature intended him to swim, in which position he is absolutely helpless. And now begins the third act. As soon as the turtle is fairly upside down, overboard



DOWN GOES THE GUNWALE OF THE BOAT, IN COMES THE TURTLE AND ALSO HALF A BOATFUL OF WATER

goes Harry. Now Tom and Harry get their shoulders under the turtle, Jack (in the boat) gets hold of one fore flipper and one hind flipper, and with a 'One, two, three, heave!' down goes the gunwale of the little boat, in comes the turtle, and also in comes with him at least half a boatful of water. Tom and Harry must now stay outside while Jack bales out with his hat to make room for them.

The little boat used to hold two small or medium-sized turtle, but only one big one. The weights as a general rule ran between two hundred and four hundred pounds, the average being about three hundred. We only caught two of over four hundred pounds.

The operation of turning the turtle and getting him into the boat can only be accomplished in shallow water—that is to say, not more than four and a half feet; if the turtle is finally brought to bay in deeper water than this, a running noose must be slipped over one of his flippers, and he must be towed into shoal water.

One of the most exciting features of the sport occurs when the turtle which has been speared happens to be lying near the edge of the reef. These reefs are regular submarine plateaux, the average depth being three or four feet, and they go down at the edge almost like a wall, into ten or twelve fathoms; so that the turtle, if lying near the edge, almost always has the wit to make for the deep water. A great effort is made to prevent him: the boat is rowed with might and main to try to intercept him; the tow-line is taken to the foremost rowlock on the proper side, so as to shoot the boat out diagonally between the turtle and the deep water. Occasionally these devices succeed, but more frequently they do not, and if he has once made up his mind to go for deep water, nothing will stop him, or turn him, and down he goes. Then begins a struggle that lasts two hours at least.

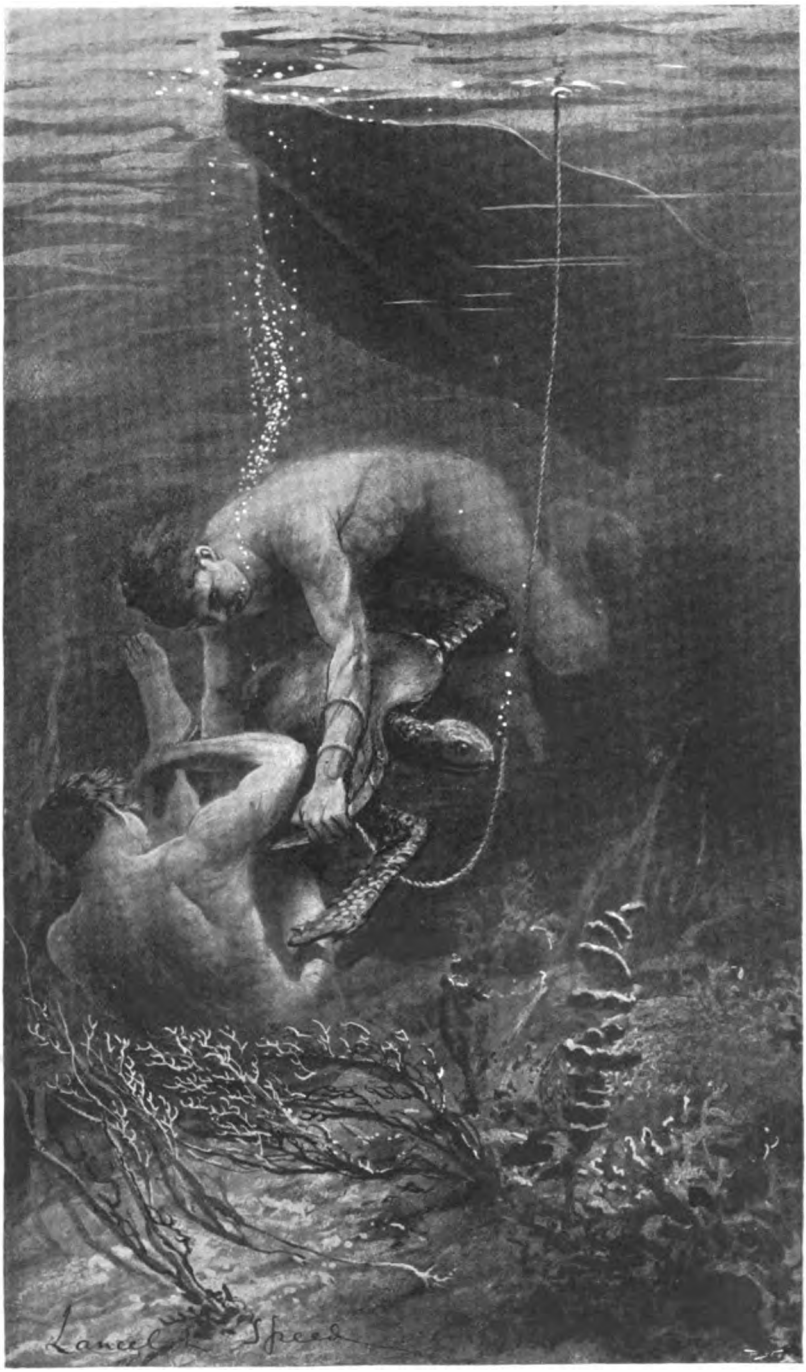
I have before remarked that a turtle has to come to the surface to breathe. If he is taking no exercise (*i.e.* lying still on the bottom) he can stay down for about an hour or perhaps more; but if he is taking exercise he must come up more frequently, just as a man must breathe quicker if he is exerting himself. The great object, then, when the turtle gets into deep water, is to keep him on the move; and for this purpose as much strain is put upon the line as can judiciously be done without breaking it or drawing out the spear-head. This operation requires careful handling, like playing a salmon or a big trout: the line must of course be kept in hand, and not made fast to any part of the

boat: and if a good steady strain is kept upon it, the turtle must strike out pretty hard to keep himself from being pulled up to the surface. This very soon exhausts his lungs, and he must come up and breathe or else be drowned. Up he rises with a rush: Jack gathers in the slack line hand over hand and keeps the boat right over him; Tom stands ready with the boat-hook or one of the oars, and just before the turtle's head reaches the surface, he brings his weapon down with a mighty splash just over him, sending him down to the bottom again without his fresh air. The turtle cannot, however, hold on long; in a very few minutes he comes up again, and this time he insists on taking breath, splash or no splash.

This game may go on for a couple of hours, and he then allows himself to be pulled up to the surface. A noose is slipped over one of his flippers, and he is towed into shoal water and secured.

On our best day we got five turtle. We went away from the ship about noon, directly the breeze sprang up, and rowed and sailed to our favourite reef, about four miles from the ship. We were very lucky, had two good turtle on board the ship by three o'clock, and started off again for the reef. Again we were in fortune's way, and quickly caught two more turtle; so we backed our luck, and secured these two to the roots of an enormous tree which had been washed down one of the great rivers and stranded on the reef. It was now getting dusk, but we went on fishing and got one more turtle, which we took back to the ship; and next morning at daylight we sent a boat, to bring on board our two captives. With the exception of this time, we never secured more than three in one day; but, as we were after them almost every day for three or four months, we caught a large number, and the difficulty was to know how to keep them in good condition until the time came for us to leave our station and go to Jamaica, where we should find plenty of friends who would be glad to get them.

First we built a pond with large lumps of brain-coral on the lee side of a small sandy islet; but one night a strong breeze sprang up, raising a considerable sea, a part of one of our walls was washed away and ten of our best turtle escaped. So then we tried another plan. We drove strong stakes into the sand just above high-water mark (there is scarcely any tide in this part of the Gulf of Mexico), and secured the turtle to these with a good length of line and an iron shackle through the double part of the creature's shell near the tail. They throve very



THE GUNNER'S MATE SAID THAT THE GUNNER WAS FREQUENTLY UNDER WATER FOR A QUARTER OF AN HOUR AT A TIME

well like this, and were able to take suitable exercise. They used to swim away steadily for about a couple of hours every day; they evidently thought they were getting somewhere, and were perfectly happy in their minds, and then went to sleep again for the rest of the twenty-four hours.

Several of my shipmates tried their hands at harpooning turtle, but generally they did not stick to it long enough to be able to distinguish between a piece of brain-coral and a turtle, or to acquire the knack of striking hard enough and drawing back the handle quickly enough to get properly fixed into a turtle, and five times out of six they failed.

One fine day, after we had been about a fortnight catching turtle, a great conspiracy was hatched. The gunner and one of the midshipmen were the conspirators, and they announced suddenly and irreverently that spearing was 'all humbug,' and that they could catch a turtle just as well without spear or line or any of the rest of the paraphernalia by just simply diving down, collaring him and turning him over on his back, without any of the preliminaries which we had always hitherto considered necessary. The orthodox turtlers laughed them to scorn; but they were so confident and so eager that the boat was placed at their disposal, and, the gunner taking one of his mates for coxswain, the two conspirators started on their hunt without the turtle-spear, having made several bets as to their success.

Some time after dark they returned to the ship with a turtle. It was a small one, but it was a turtle, and they won their wagers.

We had great difficulty in finding out what actually did happen, as the evidence was most conflicting; but, having sifted it with due care, and cross-examined the three actors and sole witnesses of the drama, it seems to have been somewhat as follows. The two conspirators, notwithstanding that they were both splendid swimmers and divers, knew very well that they would have no chance of overcoming a big turtle; so they passed several without attacking them, until after a while they sighted one below the average in size, and, sailing quietly up to him, the gunner and the midshipman dived together, and caught hold of the turtle before he had time to make off; the depth of water was said to be about four or five feet. Up to this point the account by the three witnesses was quite clear and consistent, but after this it became somewhat confused and contradictory. For instance, the gunner's mate said that the gunner was frequently under water for a quarter of an hour at a time battling with the turtle, and

that the midshipman was considerably longer—in fact, that the latter only appeared above water three times during the 'hour and a half' that they took to turn their turtle; whereas the gunner was confident that he had the turtle on his back in about two minutes, and in the boat in less than five. The midshipman did not look at his watch either before or after he went overboard, and therefore could give no trustworthy information as to time, but thought it was better fun than either school or watch-keeping. Anyhow, they caught their turtle and won their bets, but the gunner sprained his thumb so badly that he had to go about with his right hand in a sling for a fortnight, and the midshipman cut his knees and scraped his legs against the coral, so that he went stiff and sore for several days.

They were satisfied; they had proved their point; but they did not try it again.

I have often thought that a party of young men who did not mind salt water, and who sought for some novelty in sport, might hire a steam yacht and spend a month or two agreeably catching turtle on the reefs in the south-east corner of the Gulf of Mexico; and if they could make some arrangement with the Royal Mail Steam Packet Company to take home their turtle, they ought to be able to clear a good part of their expenses, as the creatures fetch a good price in London. Vera Cruz would be the head-quarters for supplies, mails, &c., and the best reefs are at Anton Lizardo, about fifteen miles to the southward. The only strong wind is from the north, and shelter can always be found under the lee of one of the reefs.

THROUGH ARCTIC LAPLAND

BY CUTCLIFFE HYNE

My companion Hayter was standing by me outside the rest-hut; he looked at the hot round sun which hung behind a hill-top close at hand, and guessed the hour as 6 A.M. I considered it to be six in the evening. We had no watch, and did not in the least know which was right, nor did we remarkably care. We were in a land where the daylight endured for each hour of the twenty-four on end, and we were setting off to visit those to whom the very name of hours was an unknown thing. We were going to seek the nomad herders in the deeper recesses of the fjeld.

We might be a week before we found them, we might be only a day. Their trail grows up after them, and no one but a herder Lapp himself should know his own whereabouts. To come across the deer pack, the only way was to quarter the country in great wide beats, and to do this quickly one must travel light. So we arranged to reduce our *entourage* to the smallest possible limits.

The excellent Johann was to come with us as personal attendant, and for once in his life that cheerful person pouted and looked sad. We might get lost, he pointed out; we should probably find no herder Lapps at all; and even if we did, it was by no means certain that they would entreat us civilly. And finally—well, he didn't want to go. He puckered up his face and nearly blubbered over it. He was a bit of a child, this loud-voiced acrobat in disguise. But in the end, when we did start, he had got his usual noisy spirits back again at the end of the first half-mile.

By way of baggage we had each of us a couple of tins of food, and though Hayter and I carried a tooth-brush each in addition, that was the end of our burdens. We were marching light, in the strictest sense of the word, and everything else that we possessed was left to the tender care of the other two carriers at the rest-hut. If we wished to drink, we must lift up fjeld water in the cup of our hands; when we slept, it must be *à la belle étoile.* No other methods are possible in the heart of Arctic Lapland.

In this irresponsible trim then we set off, and travelled for I cannot say exactly how long or how far. We had no watch to mark the time, nothing but the weariness of the legs to check the mileage. We slept when we felt inclined, we ate frugally when the emptiness of our insides refused any longer to be humbugged by draughts of water. I fancy we were two days at this game, though it might have lasted three, and if anyone insisted on four, I would not stand out very firmly. When one is on the tramp like this, and tumbles off to rest, bone-weary, it is astonishingly hard to calculate how long sleep has endured. At any rate three out of the six tins had been emptied, and we were looking longingly at the survivors.

Then we came across an encampment of the deer-herders.

It was the distant bark of a dog which first gave us advertisement of their neighbourhood. We were amongst a tangle of small hills, sparsely wooded, and richly carpeted with the ivory-yellow moss. We stopped and listened, holding our breath.

The deep-toned bark came to us again, carrying over the hills and through the scattered stems of the pines and the birches. Johann stretched out an arm and swept it slowly through a sextant of space. He brought it to a rest, and looked at each of us in turn. We nodded. Then we started off again down the direction he had pointed.

On the top of each rise we stretched out our necks expecting to see the deer-herd close beneath. There was nothing but the aching emptiness of the fjeld, and the dog's bark was not repeated. Had we——

No, there was a reindeer, and another, and four more. And there were fifty grazing on the yellow side of that ravine, with two bulls fighting in the middle of them. And there was the bivouac down amongst that juniper scrub and those grey tumbled rocks beside the stream.

A watchful hound woke out of sleep, saw us, and gave tongue diligently. Someone out of sight whistled. A stunted woman

bobbed up from a skyline, then a little bandy-legged man appeared on our flank, and came running up and shouting diligently.

Johann's face up to this had been doubtful; he was by no means certain that he, a denizen of huts, would get a civil reception from the free nomad of the fjeld. But the sight of the bandy-legged man running, or the words that he shouted, seemed to drive away all unpleasant suspicions. Johann capered to meet him, guffawing with delight; and they shook hands limply and interchanged their views on the situation for at least ten minutes. Then the little bandy-legged man came up and smiled a welcome, shook hands limply with us also, and invited us to his residence.

By this time news had gone round, flying from mouth to mouth across the ridges of the fjeld, and there had arrived at the bivouac two small girls in leather breeches and trim *matsoreos* of skin, a wrinkled old woman, a half-grown boy, and Marie, the squat little person who had seen us first from the skyline. We settled ourselves about upon the rocks and amongst the scented juniper bushes, and exchanged our news with vigorous pantomime.

A fire smouldered on a small hill of ashes in a handy open space. In the background stood the brown cloth-covered *la-wo*, a residence far more like the North American conical *tee-pee* than its nearer neighbour the Samoyede *choom*; and though it yielded up a thin smoke from the bristling sticks at its apex to tell that the domestic hearth was lit inside, and all was ready for habitation, it was plainly impossible to pack so large a party under shelter of the sloping walls on a floor space which was only seven feet in diameter. And besides, the *la-wo* is not meant for a parlour; it is merely a shelter. Go all over the rest of the world, and the host will ask his guest to 'come inside;' the wandering Arab will invite you to his black tent; even the Congo savage will ask one to enter his hut of reeds; but to the nomad Lapp this idea of a 'home' has not yet come. He will offer his hospitality to the chance stranger; he may even be lavish so far as his starveling means admit; but he has no house-pride; the lee of a rock or the sunny side of a brae under Jove's cold sky is the only snug corner or dining place which it occurs to him is needed.

However, it was evident we were being pressed to 'stay and dine.'

The contents of the larder ran about till they were needed—

to wit, small black-and-tan lemmings. There were plenty of them around, and the Lapps got up and ranged about to catch the needful supply. We turned to and did our share. They are foolish creatures, these lemmings, in personal appearance something between a guinea-pig and a rat, and with very little notion of self-preservation. After catching your lemming you skin and gut him, and then place him to toast in front of the general fire on the end of a pointed stick, which is jabbed into the ground.

We got these preliminaries settled, and squatted in a ring round the fire watching the roasts—all, that is, except the wrinkled old woman. She, good soul, was engaged upon a much more tedious ceremony. Out of a skin knapsack she had taken a small skin bag. From this she extracted some twelve green coffee beans, which she proceeded to roast one by one in a small iron spoon, to the accompaniment of vast care and solicitude. When all were cooked to her taste, she bruised them to coarse fragments —and be it well understood she did not grind them—between two stones, and put the result with water into a kettle of copper, which had one lid in the usual place and another on the end of the spout to keep out smoke and feathery wood-ash.

In the kettle the whole mixture was boiled up together into a bubbling broth of coffee fragments and coffee extract. She cleared it by an old trick which is known to campers all the world over. She put into the kettle a small splash of cold water, and the coffee grounds were promptly precipitated to the bottom. Then she poured the clear, brown, steaming liquor into a blackened bowl of birch-root, and handed it to the good-man, her husband.

We had finished our two lemmings apiece by this time—exquisitely nasty they were, too—and here was after-dinner *café noir*. The host took the bowl in his fingers, and the old woman, hunting in the leather knapsack, produced a block of beet sugar wrapped in a careful fold of skin. The host bit a chunk off this, and lodged it in his teeth; then he lifted the bowl to his lips and drank.

In a more civilised man this would have been rudeness, in a savage it was an act of simple courtesy. It was a plain assurance to all who beheld that the bowl contained no poison. Then he handed it on, and we drank in our turn, and I do not know that I have ever tasted more perfect coffee. The two girls and the half-grown boy went off to attend to their business with the herd, and we others sprawled back where we were, and smoked, and dropped off to sleep when we felt so inclined.

The summer herding of reindeer by these mountain Lapps is more active work than the pastoral life of an English shepherd. A sheep, of course, requires some management, and even a flock of lumbering Southdowns can at times stampede and do themselves considerable damage. But a reindeer herd of (say) three hundred head, maddened by mosquito bites, and once well on the move, is a force which it requires more than the ordinary bucolic science to deal with. They may easily take a month to re-collect after a successful break like this.

As a consequence, the patrol round the herd is constant and strict. Each sentry has a coil of small rope, and at the least sign of a gathering together of the beasts preparatory to a rush the sentry scampers at speed across the direction in which they are heading, paying out the rope as he (or she) goes, so that it lays like a lean grey snake upon the uneven ground. It is rather wonderful to watch what happens. The deer charge up with growing speed, sight the rope, and pull up with absurd haste, snuffing it and trembling. And then up comes the sentry, a leather-clad imp of perhaps three foot six in total length, and with voice and foot drives back the great antlered brutes in ignominy to their pasturage.

But, at the same time, it is not advisable to let the mosquito plague torment the beasts too much, and this is why the summer herding is done on the high ground, where these pests are fewer. Still even there they sometimes abound; and, when they grow very bad, the mountain Lapps will (for a treat) light fires to windward of their herd, and let them revel in the sanctuary of smoke. Fancy semi-wild deer, even through the custom of ages, accepting a diet of smoke!

The domesticated reindeer of Arctic Lapland varies much in bigness, according to the age and the breed; but, taking the average, they are smaller than the wild deer of the high fjeld in Southern Norway, and smaller than the domestic reindeer of Siberia. Still they are of no puny size, and a fine red stag of the Scottish Highlands would find many equals in girth and shoulder height amongst the Arctic herds. But the Scotchman would tower above the rest by reason of his carriage of the head and antlers.

There is nothing majestic about a reindeer's deportment. He is usually cow-hocked. His great splay-feet, with their two lateral hoofs, are excellent, it is true, for getting grip on snow surfaces, but architecturally they are far from beautiful. And the carriage of the head is distinctly bad; whether standing still or on

the move, they have their ears on a level with the withers, and the hairy nose stuck out in front.

Amongst all the deer tribes of other lands the females are hornless, but the reindeer, whether she is wild or whether she is domesticated, sports antlers of orthodox shape. They are slightly smaller than her husband's, but, like his, they begin to appear within a few weeks of birth, which, seeing that most deer do not show a trace of horn till they are at least nine months old, is an abnormally early development. The lady's headgear, too, although it is slimmer and has less points than monsieur's, is worn all through the winter, and is not got rid of till the troubles of maternity begin in the spring. And here she shows her superiority, for the bull reindeer has always cast his antlers by the end of November. This trifling fact is usually overlooked by those artists who at Christmas-time draw such pleasing pictures of impossible Lapps careering in toy-shop sledges towards a genuinely London-made *aurora borealis*. It seems a pity to cast comparison on so many pretty drawings, but let us be accurate sometimes, even if we have to forego an artistic effect.

The sledge-deer is not a natural product, but the outcome of severe training. It takes three winters of hard breaking-in before he could sell with the warranty of 'Quiet to drive in single harness: has dragged a lady.' He is not a picturesque animal when he is on the move, with a sledge behind him jolting along at the end of its long hide trace. He gets over the ground quickly, it is true, but he leaves all possible grace out of the performance. His gait is a series of long striding slides, which make one think he is eternally on the point of coming down, and predict for him wrung withers, sprung hocks, and a necessity for embrocation on every muscle of his body. He overreaches at every step, and rattles his great splay hoofs against one another like someone playing castanets. But, if not over-pressed, he can get over enormous distances at an eight- to ten-mile-an-hour speed (according to the ground), in front of a 200-lb. load, in the worst of Arctic weather, and on a miraculously small supply of forage; and he possesses climbing powers which would put even a Spanish *contrabandista's* mule to the blush.

But the nomad Lapp of this district does not exist merely as a breeder of draught animals, and not two per cent. of his flock ever feel the chafe of trace or collar. He is a purveyor of meat: he breeds, rears, and tends his deer for the one sole purpose that in due time they may be driven down to a market, and there be exchanged for the luxuries of life and a balance of current coin.

He needs sugar, green coffee-beans, and Russian leaf-tobacco, and the fjeld produces none of these things; but in the places where the reindeer can be sold there they may be bought from traders.

And at the same time he uses the herd in a measure to support his own life. The thick syrupy milk—almost as dense as the condensed Swiss milk one gets in tins elsewhere—makes part of his daily meal. We came across it not unfrequently. It is carried in grimy bladders, and, after the custom of the country, is usually rather sour. At meal-times it is poured into a large bowl of birch-root, which the host holds between his knees. There is one spoon, a shallow affair of bone, which is handed from one to another, and it is always considered polite to lick the spoon quite clean before passing it on. The milk itself, either by reason of its surroundings, or because it is made that way, has a telling flavour of ancient turpentine, which clings in the memory. But I do not think that reindeer milk eaten *à la laponne* will ever be introduced as a delicacy by English *gourmets*.

Further westward in Lapland the ownership of the deer is different. Every Finn farmer must have his six to eighteen deer for winter traffic, and as the country is more thickly settled there, a great many deer are required. In the summer these are handed over to some Lapp who will graze them and return them when the snow comes again in good condition for the heavy work. The Lapp gets a fee for his trouble, and takes as a perquisite any increase which may occur whilst the beasts are under his charge. He runs all the deer entrusted to him in this way together in one big herd, and separates them (if so be he should forget the individuals) by their respective ear-markings, which are registered property.

The niceties of scientific breeding are beyond the crude wit of this meat farmer of Arctic Lapland, and though he occasionally does a swap, weight for weight, and age for age, to bring new blood from a distant herd into his own, and so prevent continuous in-breeding, this is about the utmost extent of his efforts. He accepts the new-born calves as they appear, and does his best to keep them in fettle and get them fit for market in the smallest possible time. In summer he drives them through the forests of Arctic willow and birch, where they may browse on the young shoots or eat the crisp moss underfoot. And for the benefit of those that have not seen the performance, I may say it is a quaint sight to watch a solemn reindeer reared up on his hind legs, with his great splay fore-hoofs against a birch trunk, trying to grab the

tender foliage which dangles so temptingly just above his hairy muzzle. His one regret, then, is that nature has not given him wings. But in winter the mountain Lapp herds his deer where the snow blanket is thinnest, so that they may most easily delve down to the moss beneath.

It is a curious sight, also, to see a reindeer herd feeding in the gloom of the Arctic night, when a six-foot layer of snow intervenes between the glowering sky and its food. Each deer digs for itself a pit, hoeing the white mass with its prominent brow tines, and scratching out the powdery snow with its fore feet, after the manner of a fox terrier delving for rabbits; so that when it is grazing on the succulent moss below it is quite out of sight from the snow surface above. The deer does not enlarge the floor of this pit to any great extent, and it does not understand the art of making a trench. When one patch of the moss is eaten bare, it clambers to the surface again and makes another pit.

When the sleigh traveller, driving along through the dark twilight, comes across one of these places where a deer herd has been digging down to food, he generally has plenty of occupation before he has crossed it safely to the further side.

The reindeer, by the way, is identical with the cariboo of Northern America, and at one time, though long ago, it certainly existed in these islands of Great Britain and Ireland. It lingered longest in Caithness, and certainly was not extinguished there till the middle of the thirteenth century. But although the American red man, and the trapper, and the prehistoric Scotchman have all, at one time or another, made their living out of the deer, none of these ever bred them as a domestic animal—that is an occupation parochial to the Lapp alone. Here is a very interesting proposition. Where has all the money gone to for which, during so many weary centuries, these herds have been exchanged? The Lapp does not spend it upon himself, that is evident; and if he hoards it, where is his strong room? Legend alone deigns to tell, the Lapp himself preserves a massive ignorance.

It was a Norskman of Namsdalen who taught me all I know upon the subject, and what he said was too much like a fairy-tale to be taken very seriously. He was my hunter at the time, we were after elk, and he was moved to speech by the finding of the despoiled carcass of a cow elk which had been slain by poacher Lapps. It seems he had once been enamoured of a Lappish woman (Fin-ne, he called her) himself, and under pressure she had shown him the hoard of her tribe.

It lay in a narrow glacier which trickled its frozen stream down a bleak pass in the mountain. At one place a spur of the rock had canted away the moraine stones into the centre of the stream, and behind the spur was a little bay of rock filled, as it were, with a backwater of clear green ice. At the edge of this they knelt, and stabbed and dug with their sheath-knives, and as the pit deepened round their feet they heard the muffled groans which poured from the heart of the glacier. These were the ghosts in the ice, the Fin-ne woman told him, clammy, resistless ghosts who strangled thieves, as they had done through countless thousands of years. And when at last their knives had slashed a way to the lip of the cave, which lay below, my superstitious Norsk hunter almost believed her.

The woman herself would not go inside—she dared not. But the Norskman, though full of shrinkings, slid down over the glittering ice fragments into the cold black cave beyond. And there, in the half gloom, lit only by the few rays which struggled in through the hole they had dug, and the cold green light from the ice, what a sight it was that met his eyes! He was in the treasure-house of the Lapps, a regular Aladdin's cave, crammed with the plunder of centuries. In ordinary sacks of skin were the *kroner* of recent years, and the national silver coinage which obtained before that. There in heaps were the heterogeneous coins of past ages and every country. And beyond was a curious litter of pewter candlesticks, jewelled sword-hilts, a gold Communion chalice, a rusted iron mace, a bone crucifix, bowls, chains, ladles, knives, some of precious metal, some mere valueless relics; outside the ghosts of the ice creaked and rustled incessantly.

Here, then, was the tale of how those old sea rovers who stormed Scarboro', and burned the Humber villages, and ravaged the coasts of England and France, obtained meat to victual their galleys. Here was the plunder they had brought back from their distant piracies, peddled away to buy deer meat for fresh expeditions. But the man who looked on it all did not stop to make more than a hasty catalogue. The whispering ghosts of the ice scared him, the cold darkness of the place chilled his blood, and without, in the daylight, the Fin-ne woman incessantly whimpered and cried out that he should come back to her. . . .

This is the tale as it was told to me beside the relics of that murdered cow elk in Namsdalen, and this is all I know about the matter. A glow for treasure-hunting warmed in me. I wanted to set off at once and see that cave by the glacier for myself, and

finger its contents. But the hunter was not to be persuaded, he said he had forgotten its whereabouts. That, of course, was absurd for a man who knew every tree and every rock on the fjeld. But I rather think the Lapps had scared him into holding his tongue about the matter. He had a very real terror of their powers of sorcery, as I had learned already, and I was inclined to credit his tale about the hoard—he had not got the necessary power of invention to have made it up. Besides, the viking 'local colour' which he gave me (and which I had forgotten) was clean beyond him.

Where these herder Lapps, who were our hosts just then in Arctic Lapland, had their strong-room we were not indelicate enough to inquire, but we did push questions, as far as they would go, upon another point—we wanted to witness some practical sorcery. We wished to see the drum brought out, a genuine active curse performed, and then watch it go home to roost. When I had lived with Laplanders before I had seen nothing of these things, and well-informed friends afterwards had blamed me for not furthering questions and watching real *bona fide* sorcery in full working action.

Such a thing as witch—or rather wizard—craft seemed an anachronism, and yet it was undoubtedly done and believed in. Many a Norwegian valley farmer, who has offended his Fin-ne neighbour, has been told that his sheep or his oxen shall in consequence suffer, and has watched the poor brutes pine away and die from no apparent ailment. From a distance one glibly diagnoses poison cunningly administered, but on the spot one seems to grasp that some other influence is at work which is not so easily explained away.

We were keen, then, to see this sorcery process in full working order. We wanted to inspect the oval-headed drum with its curious figuring which is the outward and visible sign, and to watch all the ritual of spell-weaving by a recognised practitioner. We were prepared to supply him with a subject. Hayter and I both agreed that there was a certain large fat man of our acquaintance whom we would gladly sacrifice to the cause of science. Hayter should draw his portrait, we would have him thoroughly cursed, and we would go back to England and note the result for ourselves. If the fat man had dwindled appreciably, then we would credit the powers of Lapland sorcerers; otherwise we would withhold judgment, or perhaps go so far as to disbelieve.

So we broached the matter openly round the camp fire. Our grimy host grinned and shook his head. Hayter drew the fat

man's portrait and held it out alluringly. Our host sighed; the fat man was certainly a most tempting subject to carry a real good comprehensive curse. But as he sighed he shook his head. He said he had thrown up his practice as a sorcerer; he tried to imply he had sold it, and then he denied having ever practised at all. Yes, he quite understood what we wanted; he looked at the portrait hungrily, and rubbed his scrubby chin, and was truly sorry he could not undertake the job. But that sort of thing was past and over now, at any rate, on behalf of foreigners. And yet—— He looked at the fat man's portrait again and took an imaginary drum between his knees and tapped music from its head. And then he frowned and shrugged his shoulders, and begged some ship's tobacco, and began ostentatiously to talk about an attack of *laminitis* in one of his deer's hoofs which we had been prescribing for.

He let us understand very clearly that the subject was a delicate one, and that he did not choose to be drawn on it; and from him—upon sorcery—we heard no more. As it chanced, his daughter Marie took a great fancy to one of us, and we thought we might get news of what we wanted from her. But although the favoured one took many walks with the young lady over the quiet folds of the *tundra* (always keeping carefully on the windward side of her), he never got any definite information on the subject he had at heart; the damsel was clearly as ignorant as himself, and in the end, when he was 'cut out' by the gallant Johann, he bore the pain of being supplanted like a man. Marie was very nice, but—well, one could not always manage to keep to windward of her.

And so there ended our dealing with the matter. It had been one of my aspirations to some time have the power of writing a genuine interview with a practical sorcerer, and the thing plainly could not be done. If witchcraft is still practised in Lapland, it is done with small ostentation, but I am inclined to think the whole business has died out. The degenerate Lapps, those whose fathers have at one time failed as deer-herders on the fjeld, and who have come down to being vagabond river-fishers, or mere prosperous lakeside farmers, are moving with the times. Many of them can read, and some can write. Schoolmasters go amongst them during the idle months of winter. And before that practical person—the schoolmaster—the practising warlock has to hide his drum.

Holy Russia is at the schoolmaster's back, and here is another of the crimes with which that terrible country must be charged: it has elbowed out of Europe the final relics of the cult of sorcery. One could almost turn Nihilist out of sheer regret.

THE CHASE AND 'LA CHASSE'

BY CLIFFORD CORDLEY

As regards sport in general and hunting in particular, it is usually held in Britain that they do not order matters better in France. The commonalty of these sporting islands are correct in their predicate, but wrong in the application thereof and deductions therefrom. 'Many of our country gentlemen in their busy hours apply themselves wholly to the chase, or to some other diversions which they find in the fields and woods'—in their busy hours, mark you—what, then, of their hours of relaxation? Thus Mr. Spectator, writing, it is true, some 180 years ago. Pretty much the same things might, however, veritably be chronicled to-day. That is still 'quite English.' But, as to France, neither in the early days of the eighteenth nor in the latter days of the nineteenth century did or do many Gallic country gentlemen apply themselves wholly to the chase. There is neither Melton nor Harborough in France; no six-days-a-week man; no squirarchy, hunting, shooting, or fishing all the year round, bar Quarter Sessions, the County Council meetings, School Board attendance, and the like. Sir Roger de Coverley advises Mr. Spectator 'to take care how he meddles with country squires; some of them take it ill that fox-hunters are mentioned with so little respect.' There is nothing parallel to this either in Gallic literature, custom, or sentiment. For example, a noble French Master of Hounds once said to me in the English hunting field: 'C'est vrai, je suis maître d'équipage, mais ce titre-là n'a pas

autant d'importance chez nous qu'en Angleterre' (far from it, indeed)—'il s'en faut de beaucoup.'

The popular British conception of the French sportsman is derived from the amiable exaggeration of 'Mr. Punch.' Millions of our intensely insular countrymen treasure ever before the mind's eye (and review with superior chuckle) the following companion pictures: Monsieur, bent upon the *chasse au tir*, equipped with gun, dog, tasselled game-bag, couteau, horn, bandoleer, and the costume of a stage brigand. All for what? Truly to shoot at and haply slay and bring to bag a linnet or a lark. And monsieur, *en pêcheur*, fearfully and wonderfully accoutred, haunting the banks of the Seine, throughout the live-long day, determined to creel a minnow or a gudgeon, or—not die in the attempt—but go home boastfully happy and return again, full of that hope which ever animates the angler's breast.

But have we no cockney gunners or rodsters? The truth is that in France, as in countries nearer home, there are those imbued with the sublime aspirations of sport who lack either the means, the time, the natural gifts, or the opportunity to act a dignified figure in the realms of gun and rod.

Then hunting. 'Ah, there,' says your low-class Londoner—'there we have the advantage of the Froggies!' Horsemanship and the gift of riding to hounds are the prerogatives, the specialities, of Englishmen. The man in the street cannot conceive a smart Gallic cavalryman, or a French gentleman, alike able and willing to cross a country. Oh, pitiably beautiful British insularity!

Rugged, horizon-restricted patriots paint to themselves a third sporting picture. They regard M. Crapaud as garbed after the manner of comic opera: all boots, gold lace, feathers, and trumpet; and as to riding, they are convinced that he could not stick on at a trot along the high road, let alone take a fence. Nevertheless, the facts remain that Frenchmen have ridden and still do ride with the best English packs in a good place; and that in their native country they have *équipages*, or hunt establishments, of the highest order of excellence. The French nation at large is not by any means so devoted to sport, and particularly to the chase, as our own; but the gentry and nobility of France have ever followed the sport of kings—the sport of the *armiger*, or gentleman. Do we not derive from them the very language of the ancient and aristocratic art and science of venerie? Indeed, in Normandy and Brittany, allied to England and Wales in language and blood, hunting is honoured and

prosecuted, though in lesser degree, as regards numerical strength of packs and fields, much as it is in these hyper-venatic islands.

Perhaps the most striking difference between the mode English and the mode French—between the chase and '*la chasse*'—is the contrasted form and use of the horn. The French *cor de chasse* (or, far more correctly, *trompe*)—that, to our eyes, awful and ridiculous band instrument slung round the body of the *piqueur*—is, indeed, the correct and time-honoured tube wherewith to encourage and inform hounds, and to sound the *hallali*, or *mort*. Our short, straight horn (*petite cornette droite*) is quite a modern institution.

The 'Sporting Magazine,' very early in the present moribund century, says: 'George III.'s yoemen prickers (*piqueurs*) carried French horns, which they occasionally wound during the run, but the great musicianing went on when the deer was first uncarted'—an awfully impressive prelude—'and when the deer was taken.' The curved horn now carried by the huntsman of her Majesty's Buckhounds is a modification of the French horn so frequently alluded to in those and anterior days. 'We comfort our hounds with loud and couragious crys and noises both of voyse and horn,' writes a stag-hunter of 300 years ago; apologising for having all but forgotten to insist upon the importance of horns, an oversight for which he makes ample amend in the remainder of his narration.

This is what the 'Sporting Magazine' has furthermore to say of this tootling and sennet and flourish and ululation upon an occasion when George III. honoured a meet of the Buckhounds with his Royal presence: 'The sonorous strains of the horns, the musical echo of the hounds . . . was a repast all too rich. . . .'

This old-fashioned exaltation of the harmony of the chase—of the musical discord and sweet thunder of horn and hound—still survives across the Channel. On our side it has now become somewhat antiquated, archaic, 'played out.' Most of us hunt to ride, and have no patience for a pottering state of affairs in which 'Hark to Marmion,' and the tirra-lirra of the bugle once played a prominent part, as many old English and Scottish writers do testify.

This fanfare of the chase pervades nearly all the lyrical and metrical verses that deal with sport with horn and hound (*à cor et à cri*); from the songs that are roared at puppy-show luncheons and hunt dinners ('D'ye ken John Peel,' 'We'll all go a-hunting to-day,' 'Brow, bay, and trey,' and the like), to the really graceful versification of a Somerville or a Whyte Melville.

Undoubtedly, sportsmen of earlier ages attached importance to the clamour of hound and horn to a far greater extent than obtains with hunting men in the latter end of the present century; though I would not be thought to imply the disvaluing of a certain amount of this melody in our hunting fields. That sportsmen on the Continent still exalt the functions of the horn is to be accounted for by other than sentimental promptings. In France, for instance, hunting is mainly carried on in forests. Herein, the various notes of the *trompette de chasse* are absolutely necessary; not only, in some degree, to encourage and direct the hounds, but also as a guide to a scattered field, bewildered and obscured in the endless and most intricate meshes of rides in the midst of vast acres of timber and boscage.

For the purposes of this paper I now proceed to treat cursorily of *la chasse* in France, and of the chase in Britain, as regarded with the eyes of Gallic sportsmen.

The beasts of chase in France are certainly stag, hind, wolf, roedeer, fox, hare, and wild boar; they may include otter, badger, and foumart; of the pursuit of the last three I know nothing as regards the country in question.

It is written: 'M. de Baudry d'Asson a tout chassé, cerfs, lièvres, renards, sangliers, loups et chevreuils; il a tout pris. Il a chassé en plaine et dans des forêts très-vives, sous futaies et dans les taillis.'

Before, however, proceeding to deal with such quarry as deer, fox, or sanglier, I would direct attention to the fact that the rich sporting soil of beautiful France is not barren as regards drag-hunting. Writing some eight years ago upon 'Les Drags de Pau,' M. Donatien Levesque, a most ardent and accomplished sportsman, supplies some highly interesting information. He states that in 1840, Colonel White, Sir Henry Oxenden, and Mr. Cornewall declared war against the foxes of the country of Pau, and began the occupation of the province of Béarn. Later, Mr. J. H. Livingstone, an American, came upon the scene and carried on the campaign. Later still, 'around Pau the foxes became rare, and the master of the hounds started, in great secrecy, to hunt a drag.' The secret speedily became known, and subsequently Messrs. Powell and Standish carried on the gallopade openly and successfully.

In 1875, the Pau Hunt Club was formally established, and was recognised by the préfet, the Marquis de Nadaillac. But since 1867 a master of a subscription pack has been from time to time elected. In that year, Captain Alcok (Alcock?), an

Irishman, was master. Passing on, with much interesting matter, M. Levesque brings us to the year 1885, when Sir Victor Brook came upon the scene. Of Sir Victor, as man, as horseman, as sportsman, a glowing eulogy is penned. And here I should chronicle the fact that the master of the Pau drag-hounds, at the period in question, successfully prosecuted the legitimate campaign. During the season 1885-86, Sir Victor handled no fewer than thirty-seven brace of foxes; good runs, great sport, being the rule.

Of these 'Drags de Pau' it is instructive and apposite to note that 'every drag gives a run of ten, fourteen, sixteen kilomètres (say, six to ten miles), from point to point—a straightaway affair, over a very broken country, in which, having with difficulty surmounted one bank, it is necessary to prepare to take the following one.' All this, in a space of some fifty minutes, of which 'one passes fifteen in air.' The good French sportsman then adds: 'It is necessary to state that there are countries in England where the obstacles are much more formidable, much more desperate.'

It is positively delightful to find the chronicle of the 'Drags de Pau' concluding with a passage from Jorrocks, who, however, certainly did not hunt a drag.

I think that 'La Chasse au Chevreuil' is the premier sport, *à cor et à cri*, in France to-day, particularly as exhibited in the north-west of the country—in Brittany. Here, as elsewhere, the leading features of *la chasse*, as distinguished from those of the chase, are: Privacy (hunting being carried on in the forests and coverts of landowners, who invite their friends to join them in the sport); the free and complicated use of the horn, so different in shape from that now in use here; the huntsman's butcher or Napoleon boots, and mulberry, green, or brown coat; the small fields; the comparative absence of cross-country riding; the predominance of riding to hunt over hunting to ride; the scrupulous attention to the minutiæ of the art of venerie; and the singular fidelity of hounds, which are stated never to change their quarry.

Of 'La Chasse au Sanglier' I must, perforce, treat briefly, having other sections of my subject to deal with. It is pleasing to be enabled to say that since the legitimate hunting of the boar has been revived, that valiant beast has, in a great measure, been spared the ignominy of dying through the agency of villainous saltpetre. It is also interesting to know that a pack of boar-hounds often consists of thirty to forty couples. Rather a handful

of a pack! A French sportsman, from whom I would learn full particulars of the *chasse au sanglier*, got off the line at once, and launched out into a dissertation upon pig-sticking, eulogising Hindo-Britannic votaries of that most noble pursuit; and remarking that 'an English sportsman has lost a day when he has not killed an elephant or a trout; but he has doubly gained a day wherein he puts an end to an animal's existence at the peril of his own.' This was followed by a very accurate and delightful description of pig-sticking in India, together with loud praises of Lord this, Colonel that, and Mr. the other—all well-known sportsmen. 'When the British officer arrives in India, he finds himself in a vast country wherein to exercise the destructive faculties of himself and of the great variety of wild beasts.'

It is conformable with the plan of venatic campaign which guides the production of this paper, that we should see ourselves as others see us; should very briefly consider the aspect of British fox-hunting, as it presents itself to the eyes of the most sportsmanlike foreigner.

'In the month of March 1884,' writes a French gentleman, 'I spent ten days in England, hunting four times with the Duke of Rutland's hounds.' Then ensues a very lively description of sport in the shires, together with free and fair criticism thereupon. Much of this, however, designed for the instruction and edification of the writer's compatriots, would be ancient history to British folk. However, a few references may well be repeated, as bearing directly upon our contradistinctive subject. 'It is more convenient to take horse exercise in England—easier to hunt in England—than in the forests of France; but it is more difficult to follow the chase in England, in the style which English sportsmen understand by "riding," than to ride after hounds in France.' Then follow descriptions of English hunting and sketches of those whom we designate 'hard' men over a country. And, further, 'From the month of November to that of April, liberty, equality, and fraternity reign uncontrolled, as regards the chase, throughout this country, wherein they speak of little else.'

Finally, as regards this section of our discourse, 'I am inclined to believe that these foxes of the shires, artificially protected and preserved, do not equal those of our country—genuine wild animals, vagabonds, bandits, outside the law and harried on every side.' This accomplished and widely experienced sportsman, however, had never assisted at *la chasse au renard* in the West country, where the Dartmoor and Exmoor foxes are noted for their wildness, staunchness, and straight-necked qualities;

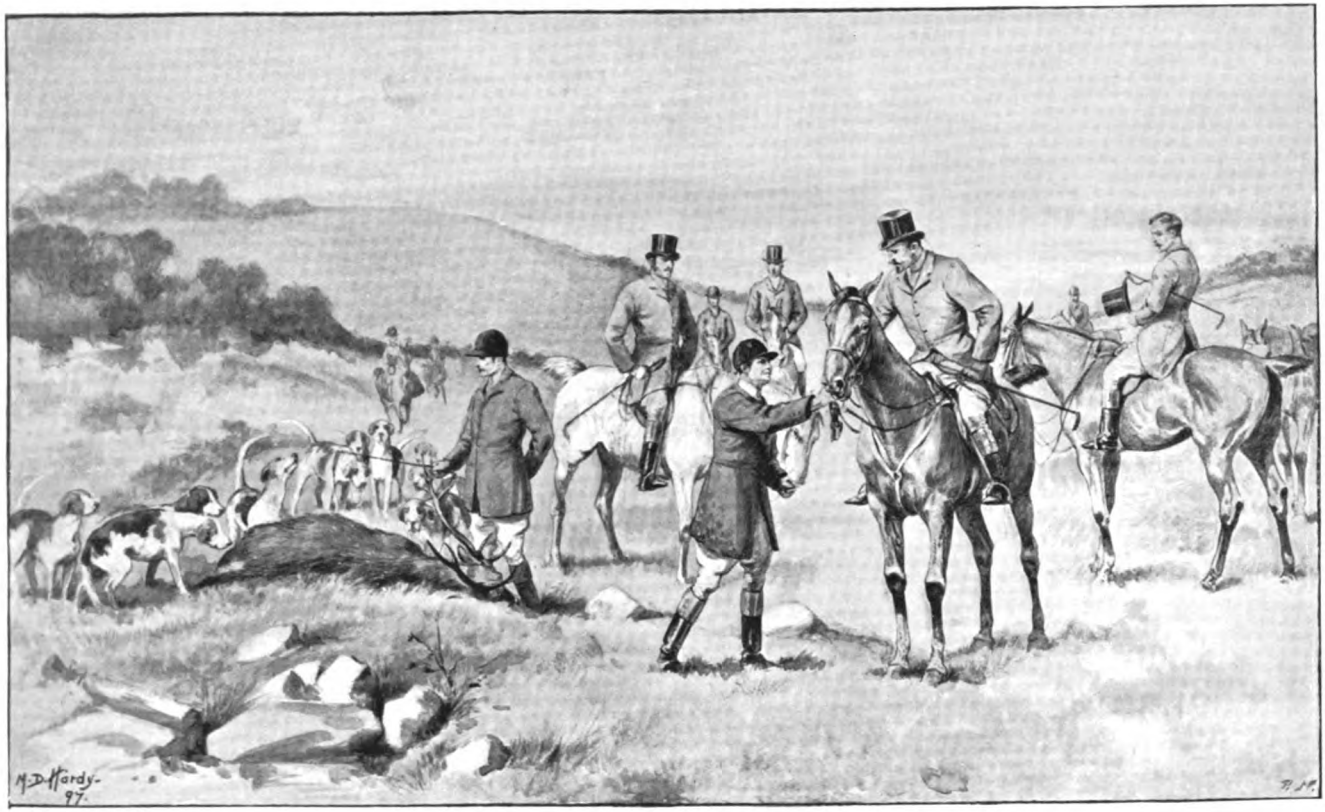
although he had hunted the stag in North Devon and West Somerset, as I now proceed to show by way of concluding my comparisons.

When, in August 1887, M. Donatien Levesque revisited this country, to have a few days' sport with the Devon and Somerset staghounds, preparatory to publishing his excellent and sportsmanlike work, 'En Déplacement: Chasses à courre en France et en Angleterre,' I was so fortunate as to make his acquaintance, and he did me the honour to place a sketch which he took of myself, riding by his side on the slopes of Anstey Moor, among the illustrations of his book.

I OBSERVED THAT M. LEVESQUE WAS VERY BADLY MOUNTED

On the occasion in question, I observed that M. Levesque was very badly mounted. He replied that the man who had supplied him with his crock, which he could hardly kick along, had taken advantage of his being a foreigner, 'Et puis il s'est dit, peut-être, que sa plus mauvaise bête serait bien assez bonne pour un Français.' Thus he very reasonably accused a noted job-master of Taunton of cherishing the same feeling which animated the breasts of our countrymen centuries ago—'We'll e'en to't like French falconers, fly at anything we see.' British view of mere foreign sportsmen.

However, on a subsequent occasion, being far better mounted, M. Levesque rode like a man and a sportsman. A stag was roused



ARTHUR HANDING THE SLOT TO THE DISTINGUISHED VISITOR

in the Culbone or Porlock coverts, crossing the Horner Valley and breaking over Dunkery. The pack being laid on in due course, the chase led over the 'gravestones' and down towards Timberscombe, or thereabouts, and after a smart gallop, the deer was brought to hand (M. Levesque being in at the death, or *l'hallali*), Arthur presenting the slot, by direction of Lord Ebrington, to the distinguished visitor.

After this I conversed much with M. Levesque upon the differences between La Chasse and the Chase, principally directing my inquiries to hunting with his pack of hounds. I gathered that the sport in question consisted in the chase of the roe-deer, prosecuted in various parts of modern Gaul, especially in the extensive forests with which that country abounds, particularly as carried on in Brittany by the pack of the Messieurs Levesque —l'équipage de Paimpont. Sport with these hounds is cognate to that for which Exmoor and its environs are famous; but whereas the Devon and Somerset pack hunts the red deer, the quarry of l'équipage de Paimpont is the roe; and whereas the Forest of Exmoor is a treeless one, la Forêt de Paimpont is a veritable forest, of which the main drive is no less than twelve miles in length.

The Paimpont hounds were kept entirely at the expense of the MM. Levesque. They hunted three days a week, the regular season beginning in November and ending with the last week of March. The pack consisted of twenty couples of (mixed) hounds, seventeen couple being about the average number taken into the field. The hounds were fed upon horseflesh and barley bread instead of meal, this novel diet being vastly effective judging by the results.

The hounds of the MM. Levesque were a cross between the old French hound and the English foxhound; the latter remote, as, indeed, is the former also. The MM. Levesque bred chiefly in and out, occasionally seeking the services of a stallion hound from some pack possessing similar blood. In fact, their system was modelled upon that of the Belvoir. The hounds possessed the good nose and cold scenting-power, together with the deep, sonorous note, of the old French hound, combined with the dash and pace—the *élan*—and good health of the foxhound. They were exhibited at the Paris Dog Show in May 1887, where they won all the *prix d'honneur* in their class—five in number. All the hounds were bred at the kennels at le Domaine de Paimpont, Plelan, Ille-et-Vilaine, and were walked upon the surrounding farms, strictly *à l'anglaise.*

Their average height was twenty-five inches; deep chest; shoulders good, and set well back; general appearance more that of a thoroughbred horse than a foxhound; colour, white and black, with a little tan over the eyes and round the muzzle, and face somewhat smoky.

The quarry was the roe-deer—male and female being hunted indiscriminately throughout the season, though on several occasions a red deer had been pulled down. Once upon a time the boar was hunted with considerable success, and twenty years ago they hunted boar solely; soon the supply became limited, a change was made to roe-deer, and for a long time a boar has never been hunted with this pack.

The red deer referred to were stags, hinds not being hunted as a rule in France, though the latter are shot where plentiful. It was gratifying to learn that in France, where hounds are educated not to change their quarry during the chase, the noblest dog in existence—the true foxhound—is conspicuous by his staunchness in this respect.

Training hounds not to change their stag is easy in comparison to training them not to change roe-deer, said M. Levesque; to train them not to change foxes, the most difficult of all. When, in bygone days, England was a country densely wooded in most parts, it was necessary that hounds should stick to their quarry; and so in France in modern times.

At Paimpont there was a professional huntsman, but no whipper-in, either regular or volunteer. M. Donatien Levesque stated that he considered one useless in a country where it is impossible to keep up with hounds; that as regards their hunt, 'a whipper-in was ornamental, might be sometimes useful - never necessary;' and that to their then huntsman 'a whipper-in was a perfect nuisance—he could not bear the sight of one.' And so the great twenty-seven-inch beauties were not animated, as are their confrères upon Exmoor, by pistol-like cracks in their rear, together with an ear-piercing 'Get away on for'ard, hanging about, wull 'ee?' Occasionally M. Rogatien Levesque officiated as huntsman with great skill and success, the establishment being under the immediate direction of this gentleman.

Quoting again the courteous Gallic Master of Hounds—'You sometimes hardly see the hounds for hours; you have to keep up to the music;' that is, those who happened to be well up rode to the music of a pack 'Matched in mouth like bells;' those who had been thrown out by some sudden turn of the chase in covert were guided by the horns of the leaders. The masters,

THOSE WHO HAD BEEN THROWN OUT BY SOME SUDDEN TURN OF THE CHASE WERE GUIDED BY THE HORNS OF THE LEADERS

the huntsmen, and the gentlemen of the hunt carried a *cor de chasse*, or, as it is now usually called, a *trompe*. The notes, or tunes, or fanfares, are various; as 'the find,' 'the slot,' 'the soil,' 'breaking covert,' 'the mort,' &c. The hounds take little notice of the music, which, in truth, is not discoursed for their instruction or delectation; it is a conversation between the human chasseurs; without it the field would be so widely scattered about the drives of the forests, that the party in at the death would be a particularly select one. But though the silver strains are not evoked as a definite indication to the pack, to hounds is conveyed, by that medium, the encouraging and invigorating information, 'Here we are!' 'It is well known that hounds hunt better when they know that their mounted allies are at hand—particularly the huntsman.'

The *cor de chasse*—you have seen it in poor Caldecott's inimitable pictures; in the drawings dear to youthful eyes and hearts; in the illustrations of the works of Herr Andersen, and elsewhere—which surrounds the sportsman's body somewhat as did the snakes that of the late Mr. Laocoon, is said not to be in the way when grief occurs. 'When you get a fall, it gets broken, that is all.'

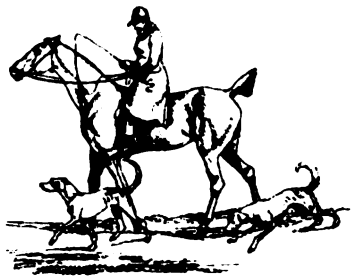
'The fixtures,' continued my informant, 'are not advertised in the newspapers. The masters of fashionable packs near Paris send a card to particular friends. As a rule it is not considered proper to go to a meet unless one is introduced or invited. In fact, hunting is not, as with you, a national sport, but a private affair, carried on chiefly in forests and woods owned by the master of the hounds and chief supporters of the hunt. Instead of selfishly shooting their deer, such landowners invite their friends and neighbours to help slay them with horse and hound and all the glorious attributes of the chase.'

The uniform of l'équipage de Paimpoint is the honourable, honoured, and befitting 'pink' coat, with black velvet collar and cuffs; black velvet waistcoat, low white hat (becoming and very sensible in covert), breeches and butcher-boots. 'Tops' are not worn, because the forest rides are 'stodgy' in the extreme—as is the country generally; inimical to those neat but delicate circlets, which, after the manner of a halo, encompass your leg, when you 'join the glad throng' and go forth to hunt. Upon the button is engraved a roebuck's head, surrounded by the motto: '*Jamais je n'oublierai.*' These words are taken from an old Breton fanfare, which ends with—

> Jamais je n'oublierai les filles de Bretagne;
> Jamais nous n'oublierons les filles de Paimpont.

'As with packs maintained at private expense in your country, so with l'équipage de Paimpont; personal friends and gentlemen to whom it is desired to pay a compliment are asked to wear the uniform of the hunt; though those who do not so dress, also come under the description "friends;" for, as I have already pointed out, in France nobody rides to hounds who is not a friend of the master, or has an introduction to him.'

Thus, you see a considerable diversity exists between La Chasse and the Chase, as regards details, social and venatic; but the spirit animating the two is the same; the ardour and science and sportsmanlike sentiment practically identical.



CYCLING ON ICE AND SNOW

BY FRANCES J. ERSKINE

THE number of people is slowly growing less who about November consign their cycles to vaseline and the storeroom. It is becoming known that not only can cycles be ridden during the winter, but that winter riding is very excellent sport, not only in keeping the caloric up—as few other sports can—but in giving practice under adverse conditions which, in the end, turns out better riders than any school or master, never mind how highly paid, in either London or Paris.

To sit a machine on a good road is a feat that any person with or without average intelligence can perform. But to keep a machine upright over a rough, snowy road, when every individual lump seems to have a separate angle of slipperiness, is quite another thing. There is no sport to touch winter cycling in point of ability required and confidence gained; but it needs care and skill, both of which factors render it far more interesting than the average scorch over good roads under a grilling sun.

Years ago—somewhere about 1884—I had my first icy rides on one of the then new Cripper tricycles. London was snow-bound; the streets were ploughed, in a rudimentary sort of way, by huge triangles of boards loaded with blocks of stone, old iron, and other oddments for weight, half a dozen struggling horses were the motive power, and over these bumpy tracks I had my first snow rides on cycle-back.

The remembrance is as vivid now as twelve years ago, of my cycling round with my skates to the Botanical Gardens, in the dim light of a London fog. The skaters on the Regent's Park ice could be heard but not seen. Vague howls and the continual 'purring' of the skate blades alone told of their presence. Just before the turn to the Inner Circle I met a superbly got up sleigh, drawn by a pair of blacks. The passers-by stared equally at us

both; they were curiosities then, both the cycle and the sleigh, as were also the snow-ploughs in Regent Street. I am free to confess it was not very good going; Crippers of those days had a lot too much weight on the front wheel, and snow riding on them, indeed any riding, was bumpy work.

The winter of '86–7 in the North of England, however, gave my love for winter riding the fervour it retains to this day. By dint of the most curious changes in temperature—it rained one hour, snowed the next, then it froze hard, then it rained and froze at the same time, then it snowed and thawed—the entire North of England, even up to Edinburgh, was converted into a mammoth skating rink. The street of the village in which we lived was a regular toboggan slide, up which horses toiled painfully by aid of huge spikes and turned-up shoes, whilst the population ceased to count their tumbles, and were reduced to either staying indoors or, with coarse stockings over their feet, hobbling along painfully over the glazed cobbles.

Being ice-bound was decidedly slow work. I debated the question of cycling, but in the very hilly country the difficulty was, to keep my feet and push the tricycle, the wheels of which developed an idiotic way of revolving aimlessly when a hill was encountered and the whole affair requiring to be levered up by main force. On the level and down hill it was perfect, but up hill —and there was a lot too much of that—was the question. One day, however, I met a man I knew tripping along as if he had solid mud underfoot. This, when others were reduced practically to all fours, roused my curiosity. He gave me to understand, with a rattle of 'r's,' he had been 'shairrped' by the blacksmith. An hour later an old pair of cycling shoes went across to the forge, to come back decorated with a half-inch triangular steel spike in each heel, and three smaller spikes in the fore part. After that I never fell whilst the ice lasted; up hill or down, glassy or rough, the hold never slipped, and the cycle was levered up hill in safety. What rides they were that winter! Though there was seldom less than 8° of frost in the middle of the day, I spun along as warm as a toast. The front wheel went in the ruts, the big drivers hopped along over the roughened sides of the road, except down hill, when the order was reversed; then the steerer ran in the roughened hoof tracks, and the drivers were locked by the strong band-brake; we half flew, half tobogganed down the 'banks' in safety, wonderful to relate. I doubt if ever on bicycle-back I can have anything equal to those rides. The going was as smooth as glass, the northern air

A SNOWY ROAD

was brisk, the sky cloudless for weeks on end. The Cheviots, covered with snow from summit to base, cut into the blue heavens, whilst to the east the deep blue sea broke on our ice-fringed shore. People who did not cycle shivered and growled at the cold. Hunters and carriage horses alike ate their heads off, but we 'daft' cycling bodies and the skaters had a royal time, which we enjoyed thoroughly.

But a snowy road is not the surface, either on tri- or bicycle, to select as a racing ground. I raced a train once, and do not wish to do it again. The manner of it was this: People who know the Lake of Geneva will remember that just by Villeneuve there is, or was, a bit of water banked off. That bit froze, and one day cycling around I found this was of excellent surface for skating. It *was* ice—bottle green, about a couple of acres, and as smooth as glass. So a party of cyclers and non-cyclers agreed to have a morning there, and I wheeled ahead to report on the surface, leaving the others to follow by train. As ill luck would have it, some sluice arrangement had wrecked our ice, which was but a mass of rough hummocky blocks. If the others got out of the train at Villeneuve they would be stranded, could neither get back to Montreux or on to Aigle to the recognised Place de Patinage. It was a mile to the station, and there was a white line of steam down by Territet. The snow was hard, bumpy, and my mount was a new machine which, as was the wont of new tricycles, ran very stiffly. However, the thing had to be done, and it ended in a dead heat, the train dashing in at one side of the station as I arrived at the other; but I place that mile amongst the stiffest runs in my experience.

For snow riding a bicycle is far better. It needs care not to ride in the ruts, which are better going, but so slippery and dangerous as to be almost impracticable and very unsafe; also even on rough tracks the best possible pedalling is required. With this, and long slight curves, unless the road is deeply drifted, it is all right; but showy dashes round corners will infallibly cause a dismount, and despite its soft looks, a snowy road can create better bruises than any other form I know of.

The greatest nuisance is the 'balling' which takes place in the bottom of the rear forks. Last winter I spent a good deal of time each ride in hacking out solid lumps of snow which had compressed so as to form an effective rear-wheel brake. It is an open question if scraping out the inside of the guard and then dressing it pretty freely with soft soap—in like way to horses' hoofs—would not prevent this choking up; but it is much to be feared

that the exceedingly narrow tread, so much in fashion with makers now, is to blame.

Everyone knows how slippery roads can be when a slow or 'silver' thaw is in progress, yet one of my most delightful rides was under these conditions. Those who live in hunting counties are aware that at times hounds will meet and try to hunt under the most unpromising circumstances. This particular morning the meet was on a main road near some woods, and, as the reflected light from the snow-covered ground seemed to offer peculiar facilities for snap shots, I got into the saddle and started on the chance of there being a meet or something photographable. Allowing an hour and ten minutes for about ten miles, to my astonishment I found the running as good as it could be. It was slippery walking, and very squashy on the grass, but on the half-frozen, half-thawed snow the pace was so good I got to my destination in forty-five minutes. It was a very typical east wind morning, cold enough in all conscience, with a grey sky, flecked and patched with the lovely clear blue which often seems peculiar to that sort of January day.

I am not going to deny that winter riding is somewhat dangerous; as has been said half a dozen times over, it needs care. It is not the child's play that ordinary riding is, but I maintain it to be the best possible practice for those who really wish to ride well. There is more absolute 'danger' run by the novice who so gaily goes down the Bayswater Road in the midst of London traffic, knowing little and caring less for rules of the road and the ordinary laws of traffic. After being pitched off a few times as a well-merited reward for rashness, the riders, if they have any good in them, settle down to pedal properly and master their machines; and with the practice this entails comes ability to keep the machine on an even keel anywhere. After a good course of winter riding, nerves are toned up for the spring, and it seems one of the most difficult things on earth to come off a bicycle, let the road be what it may.

NOTES

BY 'RAPIER'

On the subject of kills to cartridges—what proportion of success an average good shot may expect—I have had a vast number of letters from known and unknown sportsmen. The question is one which must interest all men who shoot, and that there should be considerable diversity of opinion about it is perhaps natural, for various reasons. Many men are not observant, for instance. They do not remark how often they have fired two barrels, with or without result, and if they attempt long and difficult shots at partridges barely within reach, at very high pheasants, at a rabbit that flashes over a drive, at a half phantom woodcock dimly discerned, or a hare that passes unexpectedly and disappears into thick cover, they do not really reckon them as coming into the total. They ought not really to count, the idea is, as they were not fair shots; but many cartridges are thus expended. I am quite convinced that if some fairly good shots went out with scrupulously counted cartridges, and reckoned them against the birds and ground-game they gathered, they would go to bed assured that the pick-up ought to be enormous, and that a very large proportion of it belonged to them. And then there are the winged and wounded —unfortunately.

To come to details. My friend Mr. A. J. Stuart-Wortley naturally adopts a very high standpoint, and what he regards as an average good shot is, I suspect, a good deal above what many of us consider average; for did not he 'take on' the redoubtable Dr. Carver at pigeons and tie with him, both killing, if I recollect

aright—and I saw the match—87 in 100? Well, Mr. Stuart-Wortley writes to me, 'Three kills out of five cartridges is *very good indeed*. Half-and-half is much above the average, and means very good shooting. Two out of five is quite respectable. This means over an average of days and at varieties of game, including rabbits. Of course at pheasants only (when not high) the average should be a little better all round.' Here I think my friend is rather unconsciously estimating his own achievements than those of the 'average good shot;' and that this is so I am the more inclined to imagine from the letter which Lord Walsingham has kindly written to me. This unsurpassed sportsman says, in the course of his remarks, 'One man may be a good shot in the sense of killing a larger percentage; another may be a better shot in the sense of getting his gun off more frequently. Although missing a larger percentage, the latter may kill far more game. . . . A slow picker may bag six out of ten on a calm day, and a quick looser may get four out of ten in a gale, which would bring the picker down to two. Sixty in a hundred is good shooting throughout any day, but thirty is nearer the mark with most good shots, if you take the season through, allowing for a fair proportion of wild game.'

'Thirty in a hundred!' I have propounded the idea to several friends, and their reply has been something to the effect of, 'Oh! my dear fellow, really, you know—well, of course I don't consider myself a good shot, but——' and they instance some day when you were out with them, and they were shooting well—at easy birds. If you were always ready for the creatures, and they invariably came the way you like them, of course you would kill a vast number; but birds cannot be brought up to adopt these convenient habits. If, by the way, a man tells you that he can only shoot birds that go to his left, or his right, or over his head, you may be sure the implication that he rarely misses those which go to suit him is inaccurate. You have to take them as they come, and if you cannot get them, you must wait until you can before imagining that you approach the 'average good shot' category. There is a good deal more to be considered in regard to this matter than at first sight appears, and I wish I had space to publish, or even to summarise, several of the best letters I have received: as things are I can only discuss or quote the opinions of a few typical sportsmen whose names must carry special weight.

One of these is the Hon. John Scott-Montagu, M.P., who kindly writes: 'The relation of kills to cartridges depends chiefly upon two factors—the class of shooting and the class of shot. Very easy pheasants at a moderate height, and other kinds of easy shooting, conduce to an excellent average; but, again, when pheasants come down wind, over very high trees or over a valley, the finest shots will have their average greatly reduced. Again, what would be a good average in partridge-driving late in the season would not be a good average, as a rule, covert-shooting. As to the second factor—the class of shot—this has even more to do with the question than the kind of shooting. There are some men who hardly ever try a difficult, or even a long, shot. They are content to take comparatively easy shots, and kill with more or less certainty. On the other hand, there are some men who shoot extremely quickly, and who, in the course of the day, though even, possibly, not quite so good shots as those to which reference has just been made, will yet kill a good deal more. This is especially the case with rabbits, where shooting quickly in covert must result in not so good an average as if only shots in the open or crossing a ride were taken. Also with wood-pigeons and wild-fowl: both of these can be killed at long distances with fairly heavy charges, and in the case of wood-pigeons especially, if a man only fires at comparatively easy and close shots, he will not, as a rule, have obtained many of these wily birds by the end of the day, whether he is shooting them coming into roost in a wood in the evening, or to decoys in the day-time. I should be inclined to say that the proportion of kills to cartridges is, as a rule, no real test, taking general shooting, of a sportsman's skill. Anybody can improve his average by only taking shots which are easy, and not shooting at anything he is likely to miss. However, the quick shot will be found to add far the most to the bag, and, if he does not fire at habitually long ranges, will, in proportion to shots fired, do no more harm to the stock left than the man who is a slow shooter. The quick shooter, who does not dwell on the object fired at, is, as a rule, also the safer shot of the two.'

The first letter I received was from a clergyman, who suggested half-and-half—a charming ideal. Lord Granby, on the other hand, will not commit himself to detail. 'My dear Rapier,' he writes, 'when you ask me my opinion as to what should be the proper proportion of "kills to cartridges" for an

average shot, you propound an almost impossible question; for nothing is so fatal to good shooting as the idea of making a "fine average." It demoralises the moderate shot, and induces him to poke about with his gun, while many birds at which he *ought* to fire are not shot at at all. The young gunner ought to shoot at everything which he considers *fairly* within range, and not bother his head about "picking his shots" and counting his cartridges. If he *does* begin this, he will never become a sportsman in the proper sense of the word, though he may turn out a good shot by accident. Moreover, a man may find himself for an entire day's shooting in places where birds come high, curly, and slanting-wise; whereas on another day he may be favoured continuously with comparatively easy shots. In diverse circumstances such as these it is impossible to strike an average with any success.' It was just an estimate of that average that I wanted, taking the days when one is favoured by circumstances together with the days when one is not. We may conclude, however, that from 30 to 40 per cent. of kills to cartridges is distinctly good.

I wrote last month about the (then) two-year-olds, and had an idea of summing up this time what was to be said about the three-year-olds—they will be four when these pages appear. But, in fact, there is next to nothing to be said. I have always entertained the idea that Galtee More was considerably over-rated. It has been generally assumed that he stays well; but does he? Why should he? One does not regard Bend Or as a probable sire of stayers, and why should his son be so? There is Laodamia, of course, to Kendal's credit, and perhaps she stayed; if she failed in the Cesarewitch, she won the Doncaster Cup, a two-mile race; but the ancestry on the sire's side is not suggestive of staying, and the same may certainly be said of the maternity. Morganette is a daughter of Springfield, who was a miler, and nothing more, and has produced milers—when they have been able to get so far. My idea is that Galtee More ran so moderately in the Leger because the distance was too far for him, and that if he wins the Ascot Cup next year it will be for the simple reason that he has only to meet a poor field. How this may be, time will tell. A good many things have to happen before the entries are made, and more before the race is run. There is Velasquez, a speedy horse, who falls short of the front rank, and after him we come to a severe drop. An article about the three-year-olds of the past season would scarcely be profitable.

THE
BADMINTON MAGAZINE
February 1898

MY FIRST STAG

BY THE LORD ORMATHWAITE

IN the early fifties (*oh mihi præteritos!*) the journey to the Highlands was vastly different from now. The railway terminated at Perth, and thence the journey to Inverness was performed in the four-horse coach 'Duke of Wellington,' which left the George Inn, Perth, at 5 A.M. One fine August morning in 1853 I, with three companions, occupied the front of this coach, the hind seats of which were tenanted by a hard-headed Scotch cattle-dealer and a South-country nonentity, accompanied by a lady with tortoiseshell spectacles, a preposterous bonnet, and black worsted gloves, which held a 'Black's Guide to the Highlands,' to which constant reference was made. It is a curious fact that, often as I made that journey, there never failed to be a lady on the coach similarly attired. The inside of the coach was filled by a keeper with six pointers and setters.

'Now, Jock, we ere sax minutes late—look shairp!' said the guard, as he shoved the last pointer's body in, slammed the door, and caught poor Ponto's tail, making him utter a dismal howl, the effect of which was that he was set upon by his five comrades, and we left the bonnie city of St. John with an animated dog fight going on inside.

The coach was horsed on a peculiar principle. The coachman was regarded as horse-breaker in general to the district, and

consequently every vicious brute that no one else could drive was consigned to his care. The kicker was invariably at near wheel, the bolter at off lead. It may be readily imagined that this was a system more favourable to the pocket of the contractor for horsing than to the nerves of the passengers. At one of the changes north of Pitlochrie an animal was led out with a twitch round her nose, and as soon as she was harnessed and the twitch removed she let drive with her heels at the front boot in a way that made me hope my dressing case (bags were not then invented) was well in the back of the boot. This was repeated two or three times till we arrived at a rather sharp pitch with a level ascent the other side of about a mile. At the bottom she got her leg over the pole. The coachman, Jemmie Stuart, never changed countenance as he turned to the guard with, 'Weel, just let her carry it there a wee, Jock,' and, in spite of the agonising shrieks of the lady with the tortoiseshell spectacles, indulged the bolter with a gallop, pitched into the unfortunate wheeler, who was hobbling on three legs, and never pulled up or released her till she was dead beat after a mile's gallop.

'If that don't cure ye, I'll have naething mair to do with you!' he exclaimed.

Whether it did or not I could not say, but we had no more kicking that day. In fourteen hours we arrived at Inverness, and the next day, posting seventy miles with very bad cattle over very bad roads, brought us to our destination.

After a fortnight's fishing and grouse shooting it was at length reported to us that some of 'ta teers' had the velvet in 'streeps,' and accordingly I and a now much lamented friend started for our stalking ground. Our wardrobe, provisions, &c., were carried in panniers on ponies, and we arrived at no luxurious shooting lodge, but a bothy thatched with heather containing four rooms—two for the stalker and his family, one for the kitchen, and the other our parlour and bedroom combined.

By 8 A.M. the next morning I was ready. The stalker, Donald Fraser, was not the courtly gentleman who now generally condescends to conduct sportsmen on a stalk, and into whose hand one slips the two sovereigns in the same way as one treats a physician, thinking all the time that a gold snuff-box with an appropriate inscription would be a more suitable recompense. Donald Fraser was not much removed from savagedom. During the greater part of his life he had been fox-hunter in Sutherland and Ross-shire, and I believe knew every burn and hill in both counties. He was a devout believer in fairies, witches, and

'THERE ARE TWELVE STAGS ON YON FACE, AND VARA GUDE BEASTIES AMONG THEM'

charms, knew very little English, and that little Bible English, as was generally the case in those days in the Northern Highlands. He had varied his fox-hunting occupations by constant deer and salmon poaching and occasional whisky-smuggling.

He appeared at the door with no *chef d'œuvre* of Ross, Dallmeyer or Callaghan with pancratic lenses, but a gigantic sea telescope, secured by the most complicated system of cordage ever seen since that which Ulysses cast about his sea-chest. The first owner of this venerable glass had been Jean Jacques Achille Jollifet, captain and part owner of the lugger 'Ville de Paris,' which, in the early years of the present century, had been the terror of all homeward-bound merchantmen, and which after the peace had enjoyed the worst of reputations among the revenue officers of his Britannic Majesty. She was taken after a desperate resistance by H.M. revenue cutter 'Fox,' Master-Commander John Cobb, on the coast of Sutherland, whilst in the act of bartering her few remaining cases of brandy for a return cargo of herrings, which were the chief winter sustenance of the inhabitants of that district. According to Fraser, it was shrewdly suspected that Captain Cobb was indebted for his information to some of the gude wives, who saw little justice in themselves and bairns starving in order that their husbands might enjoy a few hours of blissful oblivion. The glass, after the lugger's condemnation, had somehow come to Donald's father, from whom my friend inherited it.

I now prepared my new 40-bore rifle by Purdey, which, I believe, was the first conical bullet-shooting weapon used in that part of Ross. I may here mention my opinion that, great as is the advantage of a breech-loader over a muzzle-loader, it does not equal the improvement effected by the substitution of the conical for the spherical bullet. The first rifle I had carried a one-ounce spherical bullet propelled by one and a half drachm of powder. The drop of the ball between 100 and 150 yards was three feet; with the rifle I am speaking of, the drop between the same distances was six inches. Nothing could exceed the scorn of Fraser on the production of this weapon.

'Surely you are na ganging to shoot ta teers with that little gun? I would far rather the gun you shoot te grouses with; she will hold mair balls,' was his comment.

It was in vain I argued with him, and he was not reconciled to it even after I had hit a stone by the lochside with it, and he had witnessed the (then) marvellous quickness of the trajectory. After it was reloaded I saw by his face that there was evidently

something still wanting, and this at length turned out to be that I should put on the top of the bullet a great oblong piece of lead, which he assured me was a bullet made and charmed by a very wise witch, and would be sure to kill unless some wicked witch had exercised some strong counter-charm. I had to keep a constant watch over my rifle and use very energetic language to prevent the witch's present from being surreptitiously thrust down the barrel.

At length we were off, and oh! the pleasure of that walk, the exhilaration of spirit, and the feeling that nothing in that atmosphere could tire my limbs! We soon in our upward progress got into a thick mist, but my guide never faltered in his progress. For an hour and a half we ascended one of the steepest hills in Ross, then made an equally steep descent. Once I caught a glimpse in the mist of some animals looking as big as elephants, which Fraser declared to be twa or three hinds with their calves. We had now reached our hunting-grounds. 'I wish it would rain,' said Fraser, and never was wish so promptly granted! In five minutes neither of us had a dry thread; then suddenly appeared a small patch of blue sky, followed quickly by the clearing of the tops, which shone like silver in the morning sun, 'the sun of my Austerlitz.' A few wreaths of mist still hung half way down the hills, but were fast being cleared away by the brisk west wind that had sprung up. Meanwhile the telescope was adjusted, and suddenly my heart leapt into my mouth at the news that there were twelve stags on yon face, and 'vara gude beasties among them.'

I was provided with a small Andrew Ross glass, and at length my then inexperienced eyes detected the stags. My impatience could hardly brook what I considered my companion's apathy, but he was spying carefully the ground to see there were no other deer that would either see us or get our wind in the stalk. At length we started, after a caution to follow him and do exactly as he did. 'And you will no jump' (pronounced 'shump') 'the hags and burns, but just saftly walk through them.' All went well till we had descended our side of the glen, when we had to cross a considerable burn, which was then pretty full. Fraser stole over this, keeping his arms and stick quite motionless, stepping deftly from stone to stone. I slipped off a stone and floundered in up to my middle, incurring thereby a severe reproof from my mentor, as the burn was but partially screened by an intervening hillock from the stags.

The position was now as follows. In front of us to the north

'SAT STILL—YON HIND HAS SOME SUSPEECION!'

rose a range of hills, at the south-east corner of which we were; the wind, that great factor in yachting and stalking, was about W.S.W., and the stags were well to windward of us halfway up the hill. Anyone conversant with stalking will see that our chance was a good one unless the stags or some other deer saw us as we ascended the hill to get above them. Our progress from the burn was slow. Every hillock, every peat hag that could screen us from the stags was taken advantage of by Fraser. At length we arrived at what looked like a lake of congested ink. 'I would wish to spy yon face before we go further.' Of course the ancient glass was again called into requisition, but a deep groan escaped Fraser as he muttered, 'My glass has gone to nonsense!' On inspecting it I found that the worm of the screws inside had given way, and its always indifferent powers were now quite extinguished. Fraser received my little Ross glass much in the same spirit he had previously exhibited towards the Purdey rifle, but after using it for a few minutes his appreciation of its merits rather took the form of condemnation of his own glass than praise of mine. 'What bad justice I had from that ould glass!' was his sole remark. But the little Ross revealed to us a dangerous enemy—viz. a hind and her calf lying in a place which commanded nearly the whole ascent of the hill. Deep thought occupied the noble mind of my stalker, but he appeared unable to give expression to his resolves.

At length, with a deep guttural expression and the apology that he 'hadna much English,' he exclaimed, 'Would it seem gude to you now, captain, to walk a small piece on our bellies?' My answer was that I would readily adopt any method that would facilitate my getting within one hundred yards of those stags. In my time I had been subjected to many disagreeable modes of progression. I had marched past in slow time, I had practised the goose step, but none equalled what I was now called on to do. For a few moments I did not quite grovel like a worm, but a stern reproof, 'The hinder pairts of your body are too high!' brought me down flat as a pancake. We did not cross this peat bog, but crawled round its edges—the whole front of my new Poole suit begrimed with peat. At length we had coasted safely round this slough of despond, and reached the outlet of a sluggish burn which oozed into it.

'We will rest here while I again spy yon hind,' said Donald, and I noticed a most inviting looking seat, and was the more attracted to it from its tints resembling the hues of my respected friend Tom Sayers's face a week after the fight. Its

hues were blue, red, and a yellowish green. Never (and the expression is a bold one) was I so sold on throwing myself on it. No sponge sold in Bond Street ever equalled that moss in its retentiveness of moisture. I was in the act of rising precipitately, but was checked by the warning voice of Fraser: 'Sat still—yon hind has some suspeecion!' Nerving myself for any fate I remained quiet, and experienced a gradual but never intermitting flow of cold water commencing in the rear and percolating the whole lower part of my body.

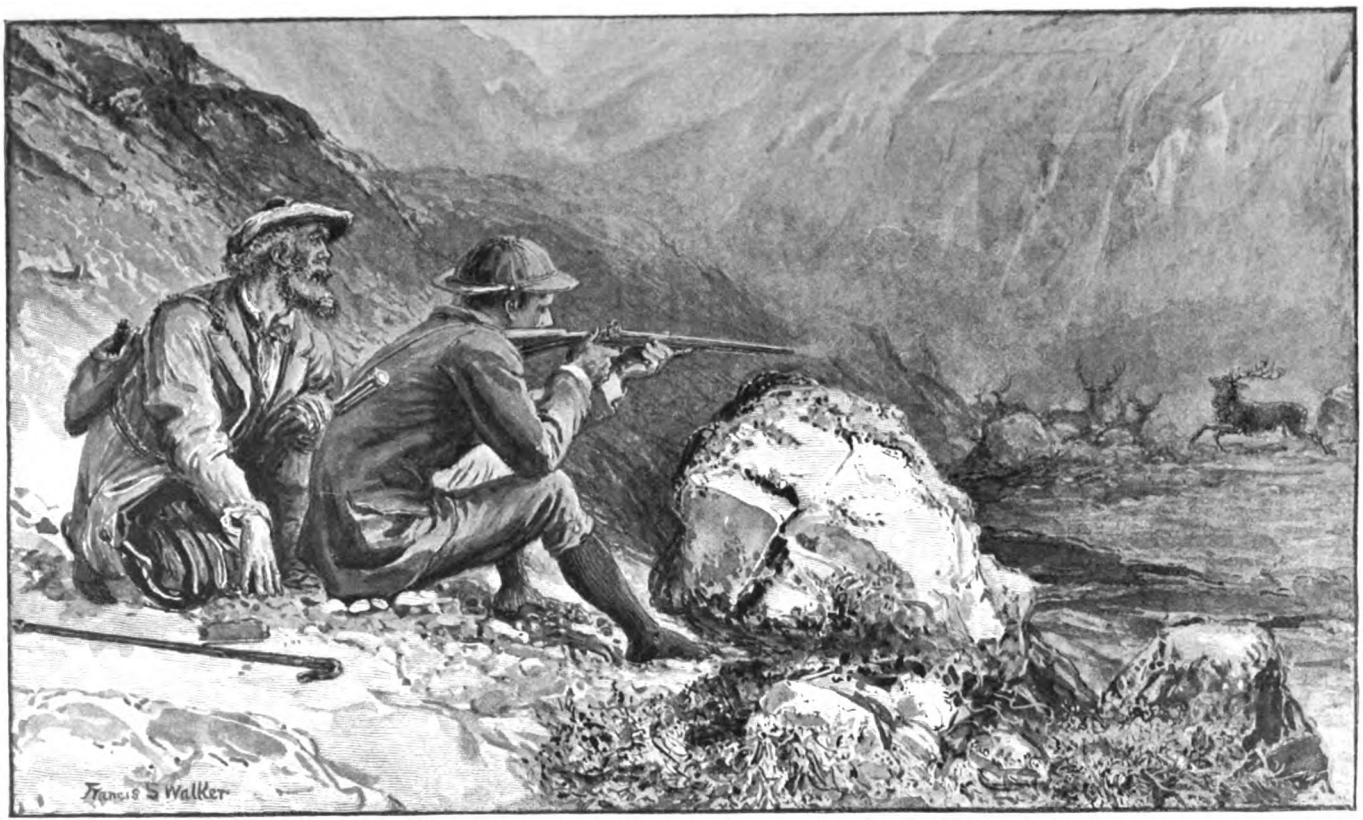
At length my mentor informed me 'Ta calf is wishing to suck.' Blessed infant, whose sweet filial instinct has relieved me from this horrid position! for the hind was so occupied with her maternal duties that she relaxed her vigilance, and allowed us to escape from the ground that was open to her view. Then a brisk walk of twenty minutes restored the circulation and brought us to a delicious spring near the top of the range of hills. The Fraser here informed me that as we must rest here till yon nasty hind had fed forward, 'it would be as weel if we lonched.'

> And then the venerable man
> From out his haversack and can
> Prepared and spread his slender store.

but in what a state! The half-grouse was soaked in peat water, the bits of foolscap paper adhering in strips like a second skin, and the biscuit was reduced to black pap. On future occasions a neat metal case slung over the gillie's shoulders in a leather cover always held my luncheon. After a hasty meal Fraser informed me that he thought the hind must have fed sufficiently to windward for us to move forward, that I should remain where I was, but that he would go and reconnoitre, and that if the way was clear, 'I will wink to you to come on.' A feeling of intense despair pervaded me. Were all my hopes of success to be dependent on my noticing at a distance of three hundred yards the motion of this extraordinary old man's eyelid?

I hinted this to Fraser. 'I will wink with my stick,' he replied, and at last I awoke to the fact that winking in his vocabulary was synonymous with signalling. He left me for about a quarter of an hour with no companion but two magnificent eagles soaring above me, and sending the ptarmigan in flights all over the hill.

The anxiously expected wink (with the stick) having been given, I joined Fraser warily. We then saw the hind and calf



THE STAG SPRANG UP AND GALLOPED WILDLY DOWNHILL

about two hundred yards off, but up wind. I saw her so plainly that, like a tiro, I thought she must see me, and hinted this to Fraser. 'If ye will only be quiet she will na see us,' he said, and she did not; presently she disappeared as if the earth had swallowed her, so suddenly did she step over a hillock into a deep hollow.

Fraser now insisted, not without many remonstrances, on depriving me of my shoes lest they should knock against the stones, and they were deposited by a boulder, together with Captain Jollifet's glass, the interior economy of which was so completely disorganised that it kept up a continual clatter like the castanets of an Ethiopian serenader. 'We will now go on our backs, and from yon rock you will not be as far from the stags as you were from the stane ye shot the morn; ye will keep low and abune; a' yer will na look ower the stane or they will tak' up yer head in the skyline; but yer will keep close to the side, and be not hurried. Will ye tak' a drink?' To the last invitation I returned an emphatic negative. Neither then nor after did I ever touch spirits except with my meals. And I believe that was one of the reasons that enabled me to walk those dear hills thirty-five years after.

We had slipped down on our backs a steep stony face of hill, and I tried to recall all the admonitions given me by that Empress of rifle shots—the late Mrs. Horatio Ross. At length we are beside the rock, and there below us are the stags, lying about eighty yards off. One caught my eye in particular. He was not the best, but a good nine-point deer. His whole body was open to me, as he lay by the side of the stone. Disregarding the warning of Fraser, 'to wait till they rise to feed,' I drew my legs up (we had gone down feet foremost), stuck both heels firmly against the ground, planted an elbow on each knee, brought the butt of the rifle well against my collar-bone, took a steady but not too long aim, held my breath, squeezed the trigger with the second joint of my finger, and fired. The stag sprang up, and I thought I had missed him, which so disconcerted me I threw away the second barrel; but, on turning to Fraser, I was astonished to see a smile of intense satisfaction on his face. I had no time to inquire the reason, for my stag, after galloping wildly downhill for about one hundred yards, stood still a moment, reeled, and was stone dead before he touched the ground. Of over five hundred which I killed before the close of my career, I do not think I killed more than two that were lying.

After Fraser had drunk 'to blood,' or rather 'bluid,' out of

my flask, in a manner that rendered my good resolution never to nip very easy to keep, I was rather hurt at no reference being made to what I considered my skill; but, instead of the flattery I was expecting, he murmured: 'I was very sure we should have a stag the day after I had touched the barrel with the charm. Ah! he was a wise witch, Rory Macdonald, and it was a strong charm that would make that little gun kill a stag.' But as I trudged back happily for three hours to our lonely bothy, I easily consoled myself by reflecting that the deeds of the greatest are appreciated by posterity, and not by their contemporaries. I was under no illusions as to the spells of the late Rory Macdonald, but I had now so complete a confidence in my rifle, the production of that great wizard, Mr. Purdey, as stood me in good stead in many a subsequent stalk on the hills of Fennick.

A COMPLETE RUSSIAN SPORTSMAN

BY FRED WHISHAW

THE type of sportsman which I shall attempt to describe in the following sketch is happily fast disappearing under the genial influence of British example. England has taught the Russians many things, and among the rest, something of the chivalry of sport. Nevertheless there are examples of the type still to be seen in considerable numbers; while a dozen years or so ago my friend Stepan would have undoubtedly represented the bulk of his fellow-Nimrods in the country of the Tsar. This gentleman's full name was Stepan Stepanitch Kuropatkin, and he was not only a sportsman, but also a member of the shooting club of Drevno, a village distant some few miles from St. Petersburg. To say that Stepan Stepanitch was a sportsman does not necessarily imply that he ever did or could or would kill anything, either feathered or four-footed; the mere killing of birds and hares was, to his way of thinking, not an essential consideration. In the opinion of Stepan Stepanitch there were but two things necessary to a man in order that he might qualify as a sportsman; he must pay his annual subscription to a shooting club, and he must set himself up in the traditional trousseau of the Russian sportsman proper—namely, a green embroidered coat, a Tyrolese

hat with a blackcock's feather stuck in it, a large game-bag, and a pair of long boots reaching considerably above his knees. Now, Stepan had paid his subscription and bought all the clothes; therefore he was a sportsman. He also possessed a gun, though he had not the most elementary idea of the way to use it. Nothing then remained for this complete specimen of the Russian Nimrod but to journey down to his club in order to taste the delights of a day passed in the woods in pursuit of the game which lurked therein. Stepan had a dim idea as to the names of some of the birds which haunt the Russian forests, such as the riabchick (tree-partridge), the blackcock, and the gluhar, or capercailzie; but none as to their appearance and natural characteristics, excepting when served up, in the last stage of their existence, under the disguise of breadcrumbs and *sauce piquante*; it was high time, he thought, that a sportsman of his calibre and qualifications should make acquaintance with all these creatures while still in their feathers. Therefore Stepan determined to join his fellow-members in a visit to the club lodge on the very next Saturday night—for all the sporting was done on Sundays in his part of the world—in order to give the final and finishing touch to his qualifications as the complete sportsman. When Saturday afternoon came round it found Stepan Stepanitch arrayed in all the splendour of his brand-new green coat and high boots, with his enormous game-bag (calculated to accommodate half a dozen capercailzies abreast) over his shoulder, and his gun in its case all ready to be conveyed to the station. On arrival at the lodge our friend found that five of his fellow-members were present, all attired, needless to say, in the regulation kit; and a right merry evening was spent over the cards, libations being freely offered in honour of the new member. It was late, therefore, when the happy sportsmen retired to rest, and correspondingly so next day when they felt sufficiently revived, after their exertions of the evening, to leave their beds. It was eleven o'clock before the company assembled over the basket of rusks and the 'samovar,' or tea-urn, which supply the place of our hearty breakfast. During the meal the question arose as to who intended to go out into the woods, and in which direction. It very soon became clear that not one of these ardent sportsmen was in the least anxious to distinguish himself in the field on this occasion; on the contrary, they one and all evinced the strongest desire to remain at home and continue the game of cards which the march of time had interrupted on the previous evening. All seemed agreed, however, that Stepan Stepanitch, as a new member,

THEY ALL EVINCED THE STRONGEST DESIRE TO CONTINUE THE GAME OF CARDS

should allow himself to be convoyed into the woods by Ivan the keeper, in order to make acquaintance with the game of the country and the proper mode to encompass its destruction. A second member good-naturedly offered to sacrifice himself so far as to accompany Stepan to the moor, if the latter would consent to go. Though feeling that this part of the sportsman's business was distinctly a nuisance, Stepan could not very well decline to accede to the wishes of his companions, especially when supported by the self-sacrificing proposal of Simeon Ivanitch, and reluctantly consented to be taken out. Ivan the keeper had a heavy load to carry, for those remaining at home were determined that the task of the shooting contingent should be rendered as light as possible, and as pleasant as plenty of vodka could make it; they had therefore packed two large bottles of that noxious fluid into the opposite corners of Stepan's enormous game-bag, together with a generous supply of sausage and bread. Besides all this, Ivan was burdened with cartridges enough to besiege a large town. With the party went Bob (pronounced Bawb), the club dog. If I were asked to state to which particular branch or family of the canine race Bob belonged, I should be obliged to reply either 'All' or else 'None.' The fact is, Bob was a nondescript animal, with something of the characteristics of any and every species of dog in the canine dictionary. At first sight he looked like a pointer, which was the character he endeavoured to keep up. But on looking at him a second time one felt that the first classification was too hasty; he was undoubtedly as much setter as pointer, and more retriever than either. At the third glance one was sure that one had at last solved the problem as to his identity; he was a lurcher, of course, a sort of lurching spaniel. At the fourth look, one gave it up, for he was anything one chose to consider him; it only depended upon the point of view from which one regarded him; for instance, if one thought of him as a pointer, he looked most like that excellent dog; if as a spaniel, he was for the time being a spaniel, and a very good spaniel too; and so throughout the list. Whatever Bob may or may not have been, however, one thing he most decidedly was, and that is, a most talented and useful servant of the club. No dog, however aristocratic of lineage, could vie with Bob the plebeian in the ease and certainty with which he could find and put up the coveys of young game which it was his duty to discover for the benefit of the sportsmen. Bob had another accomplishment: he had been taught to catch the young birds as well as to find them, and poor indeed would have been the 'bag' of his masters on many

occasions had it not been for Bob's assistance in helping out the sportsmen with the results of his skill in the pretty accomplishment of pouncing upon unsuspecting little 'cheepers' as they cowered beneath their heather tufts in the fond belief that they were invisible and 'ungetatable.' Bob possessed other talents, as will appear later on; but we must not dwell upon them now, for it is time that we followed Stepan Stepanitch into the woods, where he was to taste for the first time in his life the sweets of the chase. Now, though our friend Stepan was a novice in the art of gunning, his companion Simeon Ivanitch enjoyed a considerable reputation among the members of his club as a Nimrod of exceedingly high attainments. He had on several occasions undertaken to keep up the character of the club as a shooting community by volunteering to sally forth into the woods in pursuit of the feathered denizens thereof, when the rest of the company had preferred to remain in the shelter of the lodge, and to employ their time in the more congenial occupation of card-playing; and once, at least, he had brought home a very fair bag, though, as a matter of fact, his sole contribution to that bag had been one young blackcock which Bob had seized and damaged, and which Ivan had subsequently thrown into the air (knowing it could not fly far) in order to give the sportsman a taste of the difficulty of shooting a bird on the wing. Simeon did not hit it, but it quickly settled, and Bob as quickly pounced upon it, Simeon declaring that he had knocked it over—a fallacy which Ivan politely supported, though knowing better! Simeon had not mentioned this episode at the club; neither had he thought it necessary to explain that Bob, who was in great form that day, had murdered five out of the entire bag of eight birds, and that the keeper had shot the rest with his (Simeon's) gun, after that sporting character had grown sick of firing the kicking thing off at birds which seemed to fly all the better for it.

This, then, was the experienced and doughty champion who so generously volunteered to sacrifice his inclinations, and to give up an easy 'day off' at the lodge, in order to accompany the new member into the woods and initiate him in the joys and mysteries of the chase. It was a walk of a mile or so to the edge of the moor in which lay the first chance of finding game. Neither Stepan nor Simeon was at all pleased with this circumstance, for if there is one thing which a true Russian loathes more than another, it is being obliged to walk—though it be but a mile. This particular mile took a long while to negotiate, for frequent pauses were made in order that Ivan the keeper might be interro-

gated as to the exact distance remaining to be covered. Ivan would remove the cap from his towzled tawny head, scratch his long yellow locks, and make a calculation, with the result that abuse of the bitterest was his portion; for the sportsmen were unaccustomed to walking exercise, and every hundred yards seemed a mile to them; hence they believed themselves to be the victims of a heartless fraud on the part of Ivan. As for Bob, however, that true sportsman was enjoying himself to the top of his bent. He was also improving the occasion by keeping his hand in, so to speak: for he was hunting every lark that lay in his path that morning, in perfect style, drawing up upon the scent very carefully, pointing as stiff as a monument (to Stepan's intense astonishment, who could not imagine what the dog was up to, and was for going home and leaving him standing there, under the impression that he had gone mad), and then, when the lark rose, careering after it in the gayest and most engaging manner, barking happily, and running for hundreds of yards in the most good-humoured way, though he knew it was all a game and that he could never catch the bird. This proves what a good-natured dog Bob was, and how well he had been trained by Ivan the keeper. At length that long mile was covered, and the perspiring sportsmen were assured that the real sport might now be expected to commence at any moment. But before proceeding further it was unanimously agreed that a halt must be called and refreshments served to the wayworn travellers. The vodka was produced, together with a small tumbler, and Bacchus was freely worshipped by all three of his votaries present. The heather on which the party rested was soft and comfortable; and the question now arose, why sacrifice oneself to an idea? Was it absolutely necessary to go any further? It was decided that progress need not, in any case, be reported just yet. Half an hour should be expended upon this delightful heather, and over this pleasant vodka bottle; after that, a decision as to the further disposal of the time could be come to. But after a while Bob grew very impatient; being a total abstainer, he did not share in the delight of the present 'wait' for refreshments; he longed to be up and about, and presently Simeon took pity upon him, for Simeon, as I have shown, was a true sportsman; and it was decided to proceed. Then at last the party rose to their feet and entered upon the real business of the day.

Ivan the keeper was not unlearned in woodcraft, and knew well enough where to look for game if he chose. Naturally, being a sportsman himself, he exercised his discretion as to what and how

much game it was expedient to show his employers, since he required a good deal for himself on weekdays; but he had great confidence in the two *barins* who now accompanied him, and was well aware that either of them could be trusted not to reduce to any large extent the size of any coveys that might be met with.

This being the case, and the moors at Drevno really containing far more game of various kinds than such a scratch lot of sportsmen deserved to have at their disposal, it was not very long before the faithful Bob began to show signs of the propinquity either of another lark or else of some feathered creature more worthy the weapons of Stepan Stepanitch and his companion. He came upon a hot scent. This Bob followed up in his own particular style. He would advance a few yards, treading as delicately as though the ground were red-hot; then he would violently wag his tail and look round to encourage the sportsmen to come on; then, again, he would stiffen, and at last stand still. Then came a decidedly original action: Bob would suddenly, after standing still a moment, dart forward at a jump, and bury his nose in a tuft of grass or in a small bush. When this happened, and no infant grouse was to be seen, either startled into flight or remaining a captive under Bob's paws, Ivan would remark:

'Ah, they're running!'

'Who are?' inquired Stepan, looking all around, for he had not the faintest idea as to what all this meant.

Ivan explained that 'goodawg Bawb' (Bob was always spoken to in English on the subject of sport; Russian dogs are invariably trained with English words) had found a covey of birds—willow-grouse probably, or maybe blackgame—and was now engaged in leading his masters to the spot where the family would presently be discovered crouching.

'Holderp, Bawb; goodawg, Bawb,' continued Ivan in the purest English; 'seek debawb' (by which, I believe, he meant 'Seek dead, Bob'), and the dog unstiffened himself and went on again. At the third jump he alighted upon a young blackcock, and brought the same to Stepan with great courtesy, as to the stranger of the party.

'Devil take it!' said Stepan Stepanitch in Russian, in which language it did not sound half so bad. 'Why, this is capital sport; I had no idea we should get the birds so easily as this!'

'Don't talk, my friend,' said Simeon, 'or you'll put up the birds, and we sha'n't get a shot. Where are they, Ivan?'

POINTED IT TOWARDS THE UNSUSPECTING INFANTS

Ivan had his cap off and was scratching his head thoughtfully, looking about the while all over the ground in front of the party. 'Goodawg Bawb' was pointing stiffly all this while, and did not show any disposition to jump: that meant that the birds were not within pouncing distance and had stopped running. Suddenly Ivan's finger went to his lip, as he pointed with his left hand in the direction of a small tuft of bilberry leaves some five or six yards away.

'There they are,' he whispered; 'five of them close together, willow-grouse. Raise your guns carefully, and shoot together; you may get several at a shot.'

The advice was excellent, but it was now discovered that Stepan Stepanitch had omitted to load his gun. It was impossible to wait while he adjusted this trifling omission, for the birds might take wing before he was ready, in which case no cartridges would be burned, for Simeon would be the last person in the world to attempt a flying shot; therefore that doughty sportsman, the mighty hunter of Drevno, did not wait, but raised his deadly barrel, pointed it as accurately towards the unsuspecting infants as his natural fears permitted (Simeon freely admits that he can't bear the kicking of the gun), and pulled the trigger.

In a moment four little winged cheeping balls of feathers were skimming through the air with Bob in close and noisy pursuit, while two of their little brothers remained gasping out their innocent lives upon the heather, the victims of Simeon's unerring weapon.

This successful shot of Simeon's immensely enhanced his already high reputation among the members of the club, and raised him to a pinnacle of honour in the eyes of Stepan Stepanitch, who really began to feel that he had not attired himself in his new green coat in vain; he felt that he was indeed a sportsman among sportsmen; yet, if the truth must be told, no one was more surprised than Simeon Ivanitch himself to see those two poor fledglings bite the dust, for he had shut his eyes before pulling the trigger, and therefore he felt within his inmost soul that the luck of those two little victims had indeed been of the hardest. Naturally, Simeon did not consider it necessary to mention this fact; on the contrary, he very amiably entered into a detailed examination, for Stepan's benefit, of the considerations that go to make a good shot like himself. It was now felt, however, that sufficient unnecessary exertion had been undergone for one day, and that the proper course to pursue at present was to lie down in the soft heather, together with the game-bag and the

vodka, and to smoke cigarettes and examine the game, while Ivan was allowed to roam the country together with 'goodawg Bawb' in search of other coveys. Should he find one, and it was not too far off, the pair of Nimrods were to be apprised of the fact by means of a whistle, when they would use their discretion as to coming or not, according to the distance.

As good luck, or ill luck, would have it, before the very first cigarettes were consumed a shrill whistle from Ivan summoned the weary sportsmen once more to the fray. So close was Ivan that it would be absurd to refuse to obey his summons, but the gentlemen felt much aggrieved, nevertheless.

'Devil take the fellow!' said Simeon (I have already explained that this expression does not sound half so wicked in the Russian language). 'What on earth is he in such a hurry for? It isn't as though we had shot no game; we have a fair bag already. What's the good of hustling us about like this?'

Stepan concurred; but it was judged advisable to go, and they went.

Goodawg Bawb was standing at a dead point, but turned and smiled amiably as the two sportsmen drew near, as though he would say: 'Ah, I *thought* you would come—a couple of real sportsmen like yourselves! *I* know a true sportsman when I see one; they're always in those green coats.'

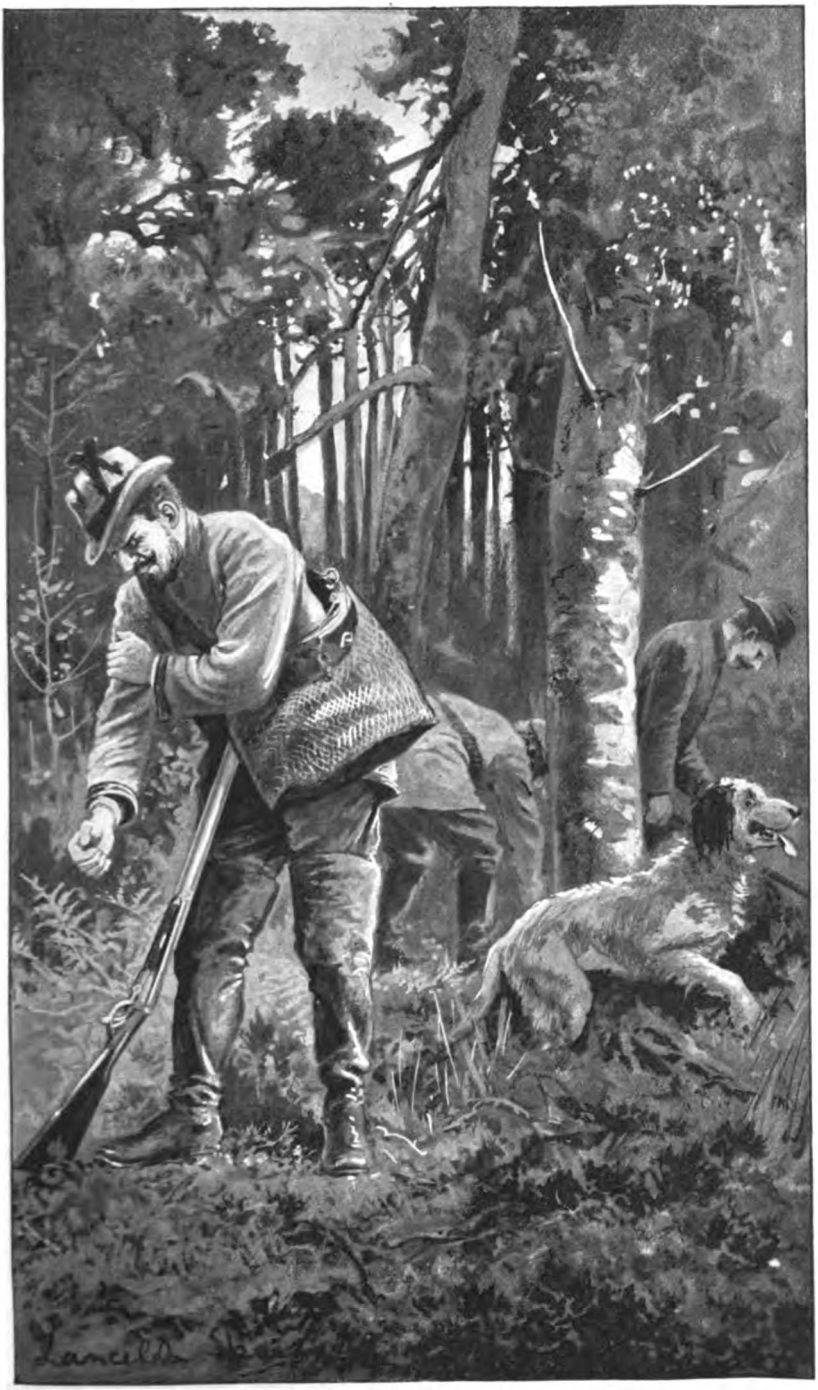
Stepan Stepanitch had loaded his gun under Simeon's tutelage, and now stood ready to empty it upon all and sundry. Bob began the fray very auspiciously by jumping upon and strangling a tiny blackcock, and a moment after Ivan pointed out to the excited gunners the bright eyes of a second member of the family, which crouched and fancied itself completely hidden under a tuft of heather ten yards away.

'You shoot first,' said generous Simeon. 'Aim along the barrel, and pull the trigger when you see the bird at the end of it.'

Stepan did so, firing both barrels off at the same instant, to his immense disgust and discomfort.

'Devil take the thing!' he said, throwing down the gun. 'How it hurts one's shoulder! I shoot no more.'

Tenderly did they pick up what was left of that poor injured fledgling. But, alas! its own mother would not have recognised it; for Stepan had proved himself to have the makings of an excellent shot in him, and had poured the whole of the contents of both barrels into the little creature's fat, fluffy person. Nothing would induce him, however, to reload his gun, or to fire another shot



'DEVIL TAKE THE THING! I SHOOT NO MORE'

either on this or on any subsequent occasion ; he said it hurt too much, and playing cards was more in his line.

The rest of the afternoon was spent by our friends upon the heather—not tramping it, of course—but at full length, while Ivan, nothing loth, was sent round the moor with gun and cartridges, and attended by Bob, to commit what execution he could among the coveys. When Ivan returned, he brought with him four or five nice little birds to swell the game-bag withal ; but though this contribution amply satisfied the sportsmen, for whose benefit and for whose ultimate glory in the eyes of their fellow-members they had been slain, these five birds did not represent the total of Ivan's bag upon that occasion. Both he and 'goodawg Bawb' were well aware of the exact spot in the heather in which there reposed, under a pile of moss, half a dozen fine young blackcock, which Ivan had reserved for his own share in the day's sport, and which, when sold next day for his benefit, would realise a sum sufficient to keep Ivan in vodka for a fortnight! As for Stepan Stepanitch, though he had earned some little reputation in consequence of his success on this, his first and only day out, he was never induced to tramp the moor, gun in hand, again ; but this circumstance did not compromise his reputation as a sportsman, either in his own eyes or in those of the other sportsmen, his fellows of the Drevno club, for, after all, if a man has a green coat and long boots and a Tyrolese hat with a feather in it, what more can he want? Stepan Stepanitch possessed all these, and he had, moreover, shot a bird. What else could a man have or do in order to qualify as a very Nimrod of the Nimrods? Stepan is now considered an authority on sporting matters, and, indeed, he knows fully as much about them as almost any other sportsman among Muscovites of his own class!

SPORT ON THE PRAIRIE

BY THE VISCOUNT KILCOURSIE

It was in the autumn of 1892 that a friend and myself—and perhaps there is no reason why I should not say that the friend was Eustace Crawley—were making our way across Canada by the Canadian Pacific Railway on a three weeks' holiday, in search of such sport as two young soldiers, very keen but very ignorant, could find. Poor Eustace, who had been no less a time than thirteen and a-half days crossing the Atlantic in the 'Numidian,' was not feeling any too fit after the third day in the train; and those long, long, dreary forests of half-burnt pines are not such interesting scenery after all as the bullfinches, brooks, and doubles which enthral one's attention at home, and which one always manages to get over on that best of hacks, a London and North-Western express!

We were eighteen miles short of Winnipeg—I remember noticing the milestone. I was crossing the platform which connects the dining-car and the sleeping-car, and a sudden jolt of the train made me drop my silver cigarette case, which bounded off on to the side of the line. We pulled up in about half a mile at a small station, and I got out to inform the station-master of the loss, telling him I was returning in about three weeks. Before we reached Winnipeg it began to snow, so I gave up all hopes of seeing my cigarette case any more.

After Winnipeg the guide-books tell one that the scenery is dull

until the foot-hills of the Rockies are reached; to my mind it begins to be interesting at this exact point. The eye, at least, is able to wander over the prairie and look out for game, instead of being shut in by those perpetual and endless tangles of fire- and wind-swept trees. Eustace's spirits rose; he had proved the vast superiority of his intellect at chess, and we were getting nearer—we could not quite say to what, but to sport of some sort.

The usual expedition one reads of is always 'fully equipped' and all preparations made, and at least one of the party always knows

TRIED TO COLLECT SOME OF THE BIRDS THAT HAD FALLEN IN THE RUSHES

the habits and ways of the game to be pursued. I cannot help thinking the greatest charm of our expedition lay in the fact that we knew nothing. We had each a thousand cartridges and a gun, a few clothes, some ready money, and, as I have said before, we were mad keen to kill.

Our plan was to hunt up an old Eton friend of mine named Spring Rice, who lived somewhere near a station called Penge—an indefinite address, but the best I could get. On arrival at this place, we two were deposited with our baggage in the middle

of the boundless prairie. There was one small wooden house in sight close by, a good many corn stacks in the middle distance, and the red-setting frosty sun on the horizon; also one railway official, who guessed that Spring Rice's farm was about eight miles off, and that the nearest vehicle would be there.

It was a quaint situation. Eustace, though the best sportsman I know, likes to be 'done' well, and I believe thoroughly expected a waggonette and pair to meet us. But how we laughed, sitting on our baggage, with the rolling prairie all around, and not a soul now in sight! We waited perhaps half an hour, and were making arrangements to spend the night at the station, when a speck appeared in the distance, which enlarged itself gradually into Spring Rice and a buckboard. Extraordinary luck and a good beginning! He was as hospitable and kind as all dwellers in the Dominion are, whether British-born or Canadian, and he soon got us back to the farm. Eustace insisted upon dressing for the coming meal, and I thought he was right, and did so too. Why dine dirty because one is six thousand miles from Piccadilly? We sat down to dinner with the host, his brother and sister—who was cook as well as hostess—and all the farm hands, mostly half-breed Indians, who were much interested and amused at us and our smoking-jackets.

After dinner we made a plan for the next day. We were to be driven twenty-four miles to a spot called Rocky Lake and to place ourselves under the guidance of one Lannion, an old sailor, who was likely to be able to put up the horses and at least give us the floor of his shanty to lie on.

Starting very early, we drove over this sea of grass in the crisp morning air behind two small Canadian horses, one of which had never been in double harness before. They were fairly beat when, after four hours' driving, we arrived at Lannion's, for we were a heavy load—three men, guns, cartridges, food, and blankets. The latter are a necessity wherever you go in the North-West, for, hospitable as all are there, they keep no linen-chests or spare blankets for chance visitors.

Before very long we were on our way to Rocky Lake, hoping for a good morning's shoot. Spring Rice was to make a détour and get to the far end, keeping well out of sight—which was easy, as the rushes were enormously tall—while Eustace and I took up a position on each side. When Spring Rice reached his place he was to fire his gun, and we *hoped* the duck would rise, fly round and round, and finally settle again, as the next piece of water was fifteen miles away.

No plan of campaign ever succeeded better. Widgeon, teal, mallard, and thousands of pintails rose at the first report, and we had as merry a ten minutes as ever duck-shooter enjoyed. The birds were scared at hearing shots on all sides, yet could not make up their minds to be off altogether. So round and round they flew, getting each time higher and higher, but rejoicing our hearts to a pitch of intense gladness, and giving us the thrill of true sport.

Then there followed a mystery. The ducks were out of sight and had disappeared, the shooting ceased; for half an hour or

BISMARCK

more we picked up what we could get at, and tried to collect some of the birds that had fallen in the rushes. By the time we had finished this, and were all talking over the fun of the thing, the water at the far end of the lake—that is, at the point where we first approached it, about three-quarters of a mile off—was literally *black* with duck once more! Where they came from I don't even now know, and at the time we certainly did nothing but chuckle at the extraordinary 'cuteness of our plan of operations and the wondrous stupidity of the birds!

We tried the same plan again, and though the brutes would keep over the centre of the lake, where it was useless to shoot, as we could not pick them up, we bagged a few more, and totalled forty-seven gathered as the morning's work. Lunch and many a yarn from Spring Rice helped to fill up the afternoon and bring us on to the time when we believed the geese came in.

At sunset we were in our old places, each hoping the geese would come in right over our heads. We very soon heard that curious sound, not much unlike a pack of hounds running in the distance. A curious point is that on the prairie one hears the geese approaching long before one can see them, and in this case it was not until the peculiar cackle was absolutely extraordinary that we saw the pioneers of this enormous flight appearing out of the horizon.

Even more remarkable is the swiftness with which, when once observed, the geese seem to approach, and it was but a few seconds before I heard Eustace's bang! bang! and saw one fellow come tumbling down, of course falling plop into the middle of the lake. I was rather surprised not to hear more shooting, as thousands of geese, now making more noise than ever, appeared to be pouring over Eustace's head, though avoiding Spring Rice and myself with irritating cussedness. I was more surprised to see presently from my hiding-place a wild form on the opposite side of the lake, apparently shouting (though the shouts were drowned by the cackle of the thousands of geese now wheeling in circles high over our heads), brandishing his gun in air, and finally with one mighty throw hurling the weapon at a string of geese that went whizzing within a few yards of the mad apparition. It was Eustace run short of cartridges, as he had left his bag at the place where we lunched! So ended an excellent day's sport.

Shooting wildfowl was only one of the varieties of sport we enjoyed on the prairies, and I now proceed to give a brief account of another expedition of a different character, carried through under the friendly auspices of one Macpherson, better known as McGinty, of High River. When we arrived at his ranch house on the morning that was to be devoted to the expedition, we found that Macpherson had made not only the most hospitable arrangements for us, but a plan of campaign against the prairie wolf and coyote—the objects of our pursuit—which made us boil with excitement to be off.

Bob, a thoroughbred, was my mount; a flea-bitten grey was provided for Eustace. The host was on an old favourite who was good over the badger-holes, and a man in a cart with a pair of

TO MY SECRET JOY BOB WAS A GOOD BIT FASTER THAN THE OTHERS

unbroken chestnuts followed; he was to bring food, cooking apparatus, blankets, guns, and cartridges for a three days' ride round. Such was the party that started off on a gorgeous November morning in tearing spirits and all the great joy of anticipation of a new sport in a new country.

First of all we had to get the hounds, seven couples of all sorts, chiefly a cross between a wolfhound and a greyhound; very fast and wiry, but not strong enough to pull down a wolf and hold him, for which special duty was kept one magnificent boarhound, by name Bismarck, a bit slow in the run but a terror to the wolf. There were a couple of foxhounds and a terrier to make up the pack.

Picture an expanse of a hundred thousand Newmarket Heaths of much the same contour and undulation. Enlarge the 'Bushes' into a patch of scrub of some forty acres. Imagine the 'Ditch' to be slowly increasing in height till it is lost in the foot-hills of the Rockies themselves, and you then have a fair idea of the vista that lay before us. The going was as good in parts as the Rowley Mile, and in others as bad as a field of ant-hills.

Over this magnificent country we started at a walk, the hounds all at 'heel.' Macpherson told us to keep a sharp look-out for any moving object, and on no account to quicken our pace when we did see anything, as the creatures at once made off, so that it was impossible then to bring off a kill—and a kill is a necessity. The wicked, sneaking treachery of the coyote and the wolf, who hang about the herds of horses, pick out a weakly colt, and then hamstring the wretched beast, deserves no less a punishment than death.

We had ridden about two or three miles before Macpherson with his more practised eye spotted a coyote sneaking over a low hill about half a mile off. The 'pack' appear to know that we have seen something, and the restraint is awful. We may only jog very gently in the right direction until we can be quite sure of giving the hounds a view, and then the fun begins. In this case Eustace and I were uncontrollable. In spite of Macpherson's warning we gave a real old English holloa, the worst thing we could do, and broke off followed by the hounds.

I got one glimpse of the coyote over the corner of a gulley, but we never saw him again—hounds had never got a sight of him at all; and feeling rather ashamed of ourselves, we returned to Macpherson, who begged us to obey him implicitly next time. We were lucky in spying another coyote before long, just coming out of some short scrub; and passing round the edge of the

growth so as to get between him and the covert, we stole up to within about four hundred yards of him before he took any notice of us. As he bounded off, some of the hounds got a view. Macpherson holloa'd this time, and away we went! Bob was divine; to my secret joy he was a good bit faster than the others, though not as fast as half the pack. The coyote was holding his own for the first few minutes, and then these splendid wolf-hounds, racing for blood and as jealous as ladies, slowly began to overhaul him. The excitement was glorious when the coyote turned round as if to head back for the covert, where we must have lost him; but old Bismarck, having played the game before, darted out from his place in the rear to cut the brute off, and in two more minutes they had him.

Macpherson had warned us not to jump off and begin clearing the carcase, as all the wolf tribe are very tenacious of life, and will always snap if they get a chance; besides which, these wild-bred hounds resent the thong, and if Bismarck were angry, it would be awkward for the person who had annoyed him. We waited, therefore, for Macpherson to come up, and watched him get out his long knife; for, instead of the 'hundred tatters of brown,' the coyote was simply bitten, not torn to death. Owing to the wonderful toughness of their shaggy skin, they are frequently not quite dead, and it is only humane to stick them behind the shoulder and so end their miseries.

While we were skinning him, two Indians on ponies rode up and by signs asked if they might skin the beast for us. This we allowed, and it was interesting to watch the extraordinary skill with which they stripped the body. They had a hunting 'permit' to be out of their 'reserve' for a week, and a small present of some tobacco from the cart which had just come up delighted them. It added not a little to the picturesque scene to watch these fine tawny Indians in their blankets riding off together into the vast space, only limited by the magnificent panorama of the Rockies, which now stood out in all their glory some fifty miles away to the west.

A few more gallops, and three more kills were marked up that day; then, after shooting a few prairie chicken for supper, we bivouacked by the side of a coolie, or stream. Eustace and I were given a prairie chicken each to pluck, clean, roast, and eat. Try it, some of you diners at a leading London restaurant, and see how far you get with the job! We both cleared the breasts and backs of feathers pretty well, but oh, the wings! Hunger drove me to cut them off, and dine as best I could off the rest. It was

WITH ONE WILD SNARL BISMARCK HURLED HIMSELF AT THE WOLF'S THROAT

good fun watching one's supper roast on a skewer over a fine brushwood fire, but what an age it seemed to take! I basted my bird with a chunk of fat off the ham which was dealt me as my ration, and it was quite a success—at any rate, no three men ever enjoyed supper more.

The horses were tethered to the cart; the stars came out. We rolled ourselves up in our blankets—it was bitterly cold—lay down on the prairie, and dozed slowly off to the weird howl of the wolves around.

Suddenly we heard a snort, and in less than no time all the five horses were loose in the pitch darkness, galloping wildly off into space, and giving us fits lest we should be trampled into pulp!

'Lie still, boys!' said Macpherson; 'it's only a wolf scaring them a bit—they won't go far.'

So sleep ruled supreme once more, and Eustace and I woke, as we thought, at daylight, only to find it eight o'clock, no sign of Macpherson, and fiendishly cold! The stream was frozen hard, so we had to break through six inches of ice to get water for breakfast and a wash. That was a wash to remember, too—it didn't take long to wake one up!

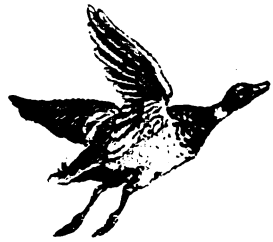
We had made a fire and the tea before Macpherson appeared on a ridge about a mile off, riding one horse and driving three others in front of him. The fifth had gone home, twenty miles off! We soon caught the three, which included my Bob, and as the sun got up to thaw us we were off once more, with only one horse in the cart, which was to meet us at a certain coolie for lunch at two o'clock.

Within half a mile of our night's camp we stopped on the top of a knoll for a spy round; and not more than a thousand yards away we saw our first real wolf, lolloping along with his nose on the ground quite unconscious of danger. There was no scrub where we could lose him nearer than three or four miles, so we were off like rockets, thankful to have such an early chance of getting warm. I forgot to mention that, by some ingenious and diabolical excuse, Eustace had persuaded me to let him ride Bob, so you may guess who had the best of this hunt, though his deep scheme was almost a fiasco, as a badger-hole all but brought him down. Hounds were revelling in the ecstasy of vengeance and racing for the great fight which they knew was before them; for it is no case of pulling him down like a beaten fox; a real wild, tearing battle is a certainty before a wolf gives in. Well the hounds knew it, too, for though they seemed to fly over the

glorious grass till they got on terms—a rushing and divine ten minutes—the leaders only cantered alongside the wolf, watching, waiting for all the reserves, as it were, before tackling him.

This curious procession of wolf and hounds at his flank, but not daring to touch him, galloped on for a few hundred yards till old Bismarck, who never hurried for wolf or man, came like a king through the rest of the pack, with one wild snarl hurled himself at the wolf's throat, and rolled over with him in deadly battle. It was almost a pity the single combat could not be fought to a finish, but, as I have shown, a prairie wolf is a fiend of cruelty, and vengeance must be taken. The other hounds were all at him together, but one was soon limping away with a wolf's bite through his leg; and, to show the marvellous tenacity of life which these wolves possess, the hounds had no sooner been called off by Macpherson, who stood with knife in hand all ready to stick him if he lay for one moment, than up he jumped, shook himself, and went another hundred yards before Bismarck had him again! It was all over with him then, though. The knife went into his wicked heart, and when we had cleaned and skinned him we only found four tooth-marks that had penetrated the hairy coat, which was at its very best. Eustace has his skin, I have his head, and delightful mementoes they are.

Three days after this we were travelling back again to the East, and I did not forget to ask for my cigarette case, which was found the very day before by some workmen who were scraping away the snow at the side of the line to make a fire, and there was a three-foot covering of snow all the way to Montreal.



SOME PRACTICAL NOTES ON CYCLING

BY THE LADY MABEL HOWARD

THE craze for bicycling as a craze has come and flourished and to a great degree has passed away; now we are all ready and anxious for the next development which the restless future will surely bring us. Some have dropped from the ranks of bicyclists from sheer physical fatigue, a great many are bored, and all who continue to bicycle do so for some purpose, as a means to an end, or as a power of locomotion where none else is available or convenient.

With those who bicycle the rage in a mild form still continues; a new machine, a new patent, a change of saddle, even a new brake, will still cause excitement and be run after. And yet the most extraordinary long-lived ignorance still exists on the part of ladies. They will buy any sort of machine which temporarily tempts the eye, regardless as to weight, height of frame, size of wheels, or the general make of the article. I have constantly seen a lady of maybe five feet ten inches trying to imagine she is happy on a nineteen-inch frame with small wheels, though she is secretly wondering why she seems so much bigger than the bicycle, and she certainly looks as if she ought to be carrying it instead of riding it. But if she has paid (as she often

has) between twenty and thirty pounds for it, she will necessarily pause (even if she discovers her mistake) before taking a second-hand price for it, which is all she will get, even immediately after purchase. So she struggles on in hopeless discomfort, with the annoying knowledge that it might have been avoided if she had not been in such a hurry to procure any sort of machine which came handy to buy.

There is no doubt that for ladies a good machine, or what is called a first-class machine at one of the best maker's, is worth getting. I do not mean for a moment by this to disparage the cheap bicycles; there are excellent ones of their kind for 8*l.*, 9*l.* and 10*l.*, which are a blessing to those who can only afford that amount, and whose health and holidays depend on exercise.

But apart from these, there is the lady who means to spend 12*l.* to 15*l.* Now, in my opinion, anyone who is able to get together 15*l.* can, with a little more time and energy, add another 5*l.*, which will make her the possessor of a first-class machine, and which, I venture to think, is worth the trouble and perhaps self-denial it has taken to collect the extra money. So often owners of cheaper bicycles express themselves dissatisfied and complain that their machines are wearing out, don't last, &c., and they feel quite ill-used and resentful because they expected a 12*l.* article to bear the wear and tear of one for which their friend had perhaps paid 21*l.* I am convinced that, in cycles as in everything else, the best article is cheapest in the long run.

There is also a very important fact which few women grasp. In choosing a bicycle the careful lady will give her height and weight as a guide which the maker is to follow. This is quite a mistake. The only valuable measurement which will secure the right height of frame is the measurement taken from the waist downwards, thereby securing the length of leg, which is the great essential.

I have often seen a lady of average height obliged to ride much higher than one three or four inches taller, from the mere fact that the former had a short waist, and the latter a long one; so that full height is no criterion, and can be no guide as to height of frame. As a rule women like to ride with too low a frame; this is slowly, but surely I think, becoming recognised, and will doubtless be changed; but till quite lately, the great majority rode regardless of their height, on bicycles the frames of which averaged from nineteen to twenty-one inches high, with twenty-six-, or at the most twenty-eight-, inch wheels. I am convinced that no woman ought to ride on a nineteen-inch frame and twenty-

six-inch wheels unless she is under five feet three in height. And here I think comes the question of jumping into the saddle. Anyone with a little perseverance and confidence can learn to do this, and the relief of the higher frame and larger wheels is enormous; it turns a toil into a pleasure. But we live and learn, and generally by bitter experiences. I have seen ladies who have been riding for over a year, and in some cases for nearly

A BAD FALL IS BOUND TO FOLLOW

two years, still uncertain as to whether, when they jump, they will make a successful start; sometimes they do, but very often they return to the road, and by the time they are fairly off they are hot and breathless from the effort, and have added the equivalent of two or three miles to their fatigue. Starting, like everything else, is extremely easy when one knows how to do it, and takes only some ten minutes to learn when approached in the only possibly successful way. The right pedal must be raised,

and your foot pressed on to it as you give the spring into the saddle; but by far the most important point is that you must as you spring lean forward your whole weight, or very nearly your whole weight, on to the handles; as this, and this only, gives you the impetus you need. I have of late taught many people by this most simple process after they had been struggling for months with uncertain and ineffectual starts; and if you are going a long trip or riding in hilly country, where it is necessary to mount and dismount constantly, it is most important that you should be able to start well, or it becomes as hard and takes up as much time as dealing with a jibbing horse.

There is no doubt, from the safety point of view, that no lady ought to indulge in what is commonly called 'coasting.' A great many will smile, and will doubtless say this is a ridiculous caution, but I maintain that no woman can put her feet up with any certainty of safety (it is different with men), however short or however narrow her skirt may be. But taking into consideration that round every corner going downhill the wind catches you at a different angle, thereby blowing your skirt in a different position, it is quite possible that it may catch in the pedals. If this once happens a bad fall is bound to follow, and I have met one or two people minus teeth, or scarred for life, who furnished sad warnings against this dangerous habit, which after all, beyond the momentary pleasure and pride in the performance, adds very little to the average speed of the day; and I am certain no pleasure that may be derived from coasting is worth the loss of teeth or the fracture of a jaw.

The question of health as regards bicycling, again, has been much discussed, doctors have been consulted, articles written, but no one seems to have arrived at any definite or universal decision; and I believe that in this respect everything depends upon the individual. When one sees nervous, delicate women, who till bicycling became the custom had spent half their day in bed and the other half on a sofa or driving in a landau, now riding twenty miles a day, regardless of rain, sun and wind, one feels that life for them must have assumed a better and more healthy aspect, and that bicycling has done its work for the generation. But on the other hand, when one sees, as one often does, exhausted, red-faced, overdone women, boasting of their hundred miles a day, one wonders if we all look like that, and registers a vow to bicycle no more, a vow which is kept for possibly a week.

A word as to skirts. It is curious to see how many women think it necessary to bicycle in an extremely short and ungraceful

skirt. As a matter of fact, a bicycle skirt need not be any shorter than an ordinary one, and the only point to be observed is that it should be cut narrow. The widest skirt it is possible to bicycle in with any comfort or safety is three yards and a half in width, but three yards and a quarter is much better. It is quite easy to make any skirt ready for bicycling at a moment's notice by pinning the back together with safety pins (from behind the side seams), at intervals of about two inches from the top to the bottom of the skirt. If done evenly this method is quite safe, and does away with the fear of being wound up in the wheel; but of course this is only to be recommended temporarily as a makeshift. In my humble opinion, the lady who bicycles in a very short and unnecessarily narrow skirt has a more ungraceful appearance than the one who has discarded all personal pride and wears the rightly abused rational dress.

When one can really ride there is perhaps no greater delight than a day in the Lake Country, on a bicycle. The hills can be compassed, and the roads, the scenery, and the air are not to be surpassed anywhere in this country. A sunny day, a light north wind, sufficient to freshen without impeding, a clear blue sky, roads in good order, and one wants nothing more. Let me describe such a day. We left Ullswater—four of us—all intent on our outing with these perfect conditions surrounding us. We rode by the lake, past the picturesque villages of Glenridding and Patterdale, overshadowed by Helvellyn, up the valley of Deepdale, running along the river Goldrill, and paused for a moment by the shores of Brothers' Water lake, lying as it does at the foot of the Kirkstone Pass, shaded by Fairfield, whose dark depths held the tragedy of the two brothers' deaths from whom the lake takes its name. But it is too early to pause yet. We pull ourselves together and begin the weary ascent of the pass, the top of which is 1,500 feet above the sea, from which point we view the panorama. Behind us lies the stony rocky path with Brothers' Water at its base, and in the farther distance in the background is a peep of Ullswater and the green hills of Gowbarrow Park. Stretching in front of us is the head of Windermere, backed by its grim hills, which form such a striking contrast to the cultivation and civilisation of the lower ground.

The would-be romance of the scene is somewhat marred by the chatter and laughter of the many tourists, who, like us, are resting at the summit, where stands the little wayside inn, with the inscription over its door proclaiming itself the 'highest inhabited house in England.' Tourists on coaches, on foot, on bi-

cycles, on ponies, are drinking, smoking, eating apples, horses alike enjoying a few precious moments' rest, and gratefully accepting a pail of water. We take the road to our left and speed onwards down the hill into the vale of Troutbeck. This truly is an ideal ride, a beautiful road, restored by the Westmorland County Council, devoid of stones and ruts, enabling us to enjoy the view of the mountains which overtower us, as we race down the valley. On through the little village of Troutbeck with its 'Mortal Man Inn,' its many untouched relics of the fifteenth century, its curious old houses and drinking troughs dedicated to the saints, down the last steep hill to the Lowood Hotel, where we are on the Lake of Windermere. Too hungry even to cast a casual glance, we de-

WE RACE DOWN THE VALLEY

WE PUSH OUR BICYCLES UP THE HILL

scend upon the coffee-room; three-quarters of an hour's rest is allowed us, and we are right glad of it.

We spend ten happy minutes lying on the grass in the hotel garden, the hum of bees the only sound, except the occasional splash of an oar, or the puff of a distant steamer. But we are off again on the road to Ambleside and Grasmere, passing Wordsworth's house, and stopping for a moment to look with interest and reverence where the great man lived and wrote. A little wearily, we push our bicycles up the hill known as Dunmail Raise, and from the top of this a five minutes' spin brings us down to Thirlmere, that much-talked-of lake (the so-called destruction of which caused so much commotion some years ago), now in the possession of the Manchester Corporation. But it is an ill wind, &c., and the road they have provided for the public is a benefit which goes far to make up for the water towers and other slight disfigurements which the day-dreamers of the Lake country complain of so much. Perfectly level for five miles, and more resembling a billiard table than a road, it is a joy to ride, specially when fatigue is beginning to make itself felt, and every hillock appears a mountain.

Passing Thirlmere, we travel on down the valley of St. John, which is commonly reported to be haunted, to Threlkeld, from there running along under Blencathra, and then, leaving the hills, strike across the lonely moor back to Ullswater. There is no sign of life except for a few grouse, who rise at the sound of our voices. Ullswater once more; and now, as the moon has risen, we cannot pass through Gowbarrow Park without visiting Aira Force, hoping, or fearing perhaps, that we may see the white form of the Lady Aira, who has walked through the glade for many centuries, perhaps hear her cry as she takes her final leap into the fall, the legend of which comes to us from the days of the Crusades.

But no vision is vouchsafed us. The fall, bathed in moonlight, with its bushes of mountain ash falling over it, and the reflection of the moon into the quiet depths of the pool below, are enough for us. We return to our prosaic machines, and once more mounting them, ride home, ourselves and bicycles dusty, our holiday over, our happy day gone to join the few others like it, and only the memory, which at the best is a poor and fading thing, left to us.

Riding a bicycle in hill country is very hard at first; for those unused to it, indeed, it is almost impossible, and entails endless jumping on and off the machine, making the business very little

better than walking. There is no doubt that riding constantly up stiff hills is injurious to women; but it is wonderful how comparatively easy it becomes to ride up an average steep hill when one is used to it, and when one knows how to help oneself. A reckless bicyclist will attempt to rush a hill, and this (unless it is a short one) is fatal, as, long before she réaches the top, she will come to the end of her breath and strength, and will half jump, half fall off, completely exhausted. But a woman who understands the art will start slowly, sitting rather forward in her saddle and leaning on the handles, her feet drawing the pedals upwards as she moves them. It is extraordinary what length of hill can be faced in this way with little or no exertion. It is difficult to learn to ride up hill slowly, and very often takes time to accomplish with any success, but it is the old story of the hare and the tortoise, and as then, so now, the tortoise wins.

There are a great many opinions as to pace, and there is no doubt that very often ladies are outpaced, especially when riding with men. There is nothing so exhausting as being a little outpaced; nearly everyone will make a struggle to keep up, and always riding a little faster than one can with comfort becomes towards the end of a long day a terrible labour, very often knocking women up altogether. I think a very fair average pace in a hill country is nine miles an hour; if the distance is a long one—forty or fifty miles—eight miles is often fast enough; but so much depends upon the day and the wind that it is almost impossible to make any rule about this. In a flat country, with a high-gear machine, it is very different, and twelve to fourteen miles an hour is quite easy. Of course there are the hopelessly slow bicyclists, who walk up the hills, down the hills, and even sometimes on the flat. I have met these ladies, who have often had numbers of lessons, who own first-class bicycles and have everything in their favour except themselves; but such riders are better left at home to journey round and round the garden paths, as they spoil the day for everyone else and get very little pleasure out of it themselves: they will never really ride, and I strongly advise them to sell their machines and start something else more suitable to them.

THE ETON WALL-GAME

BY R. E. MACNAGHTEN (KEEPER OF COLLEGE WALL, 1879)

THE individuality of the Englishman is nowhere more marked than in his games; and of no game is this more true than of football. Many of our public schools, even those of more recent foundation, have developed in football an individual game of their own, for football is *par excellence* the public-school game. And though from one of these public schools a particular form of the game has so spread that it is probably played by this time in almost every quarter of the habitable globe, yet the Rugby game is, after all, only the supreme instance of the individuality of public-school football. Even if we grant that it is a case of the survival of the fittest, there have been two causes plainly at work to contribute to its enormous and widespread popularity, the influence of a book and a man. Had Dr. Arnold not been headmaster of Rugby, and had 'Tom Brown's Schooldays' never been written, there would have been at least a possibility of some other form of football proving a dangerous rival to that which has now gained so firm a hold on the public mind as to make rivalry out of the question. Yet Eton, Harrow, Winchester, Uppingham, and I believe also Marlborough and Repton, besides possibly other schools, have each clearly developed football systems of their own; while Eton stands in the proud position of having two systems, each clearly marked and wholly individual—namely, the Field and the Wall Games.

The exact origin of the Wall-game is, I believe, involved in some obscurity, but there have been annual matches between Collegers and Oppidans for many years; St. Andrew's Day, on which this match is always if possible played, being *par excellence* the gala day of Wall football. But, however uncertain the actual date of the foundation of the game may be, its evolution as a separate and distinct kind of football is perfectly clear, and is doubtless owing almost entirely to the lofty wall [1] which separates the Slough Road from that part of the Eton playing-fields which is known as College Field. At the College end another wall,

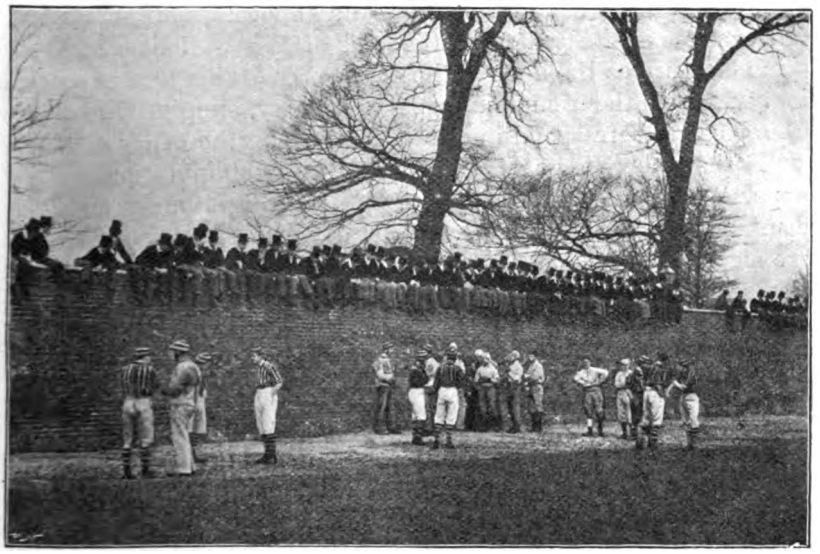
'WALL-GAME' COSTUMES

forming the enclosure to one of the masters' gardens, runs at right angles to the wall itself, and in this there is a door forming a means of exit on to the playing-fields.

The origin of the Wall-game, then, would be as follows. In the earliest days of the game, College Field was no doubt used in winter, as now, for ordinary football; and at some time or other the left-hand boundary line must have been extended to the Wall itself. This being the case, it is easy to understand that on certain

[1] There is another 'wall' at Eton, bounding the College precincts, and equally called 'The Wall.' Etonians, however, never confound the two, as the context always shows which is meant.

occasions it would pay a player to take the ball to the wall, and that, on other players from both sides coming up, 'bullies' or 'squashes' would be formed against the wall itself. But this use of the wall in the ordinary game would lead to wholly different tactics being employed, and no doubt it would be felt in time that this new development demanded a game for itself, more especially as, owing to the roughness of the wall, ordinary football attire would soon be torn to pieces. If, however, the side line were drawn a few paces from the wall and parallel with it, these disadvantages would be done away with, and, at the same time, in



WALL ON ST. ANDREW'S DAY, BEFORE FIRST BULLY

the space between the new side-line and the wall there would be left a long narrow strip much more suitable for playing in when trying the new tactics which would inevitably spring up when the wall itself became a factor in the play.

A somewhat similar analogy is furnished by the Eton Fives-Courts, on which the 'Eton' game of Fives is played. The first and original Fives-Court, from which, indeed, all the others are copied, was formed by those two buttresses of the College chapel from the end of which the steps to the side entrance rose. The celebrated 'pepper-box,' the step between the upper and lower courts, and the ridge which forms the line, were all parts of the natural architecture; the former indeed, if I remember aright,

forming a drain or outlet for superfluous water. But this 'natural' court was found so admirably adapted for the elaboration of a skilled, graceful, and highly scientific game, that the architecture has, with the most trifling deviations, been adopted not only in the numerous courts at Eton which have since been built, but also wherever the 'Eton' type of Fives is played.

Similarly, for developing the Wall-game we have a long narrow strip of land parallel to the wall, with a door at one end lying some feet outside the actual line. This would be the most natural (and indeed the only possible) object for a goal at the one end, while at the other there is no similar object ready to use. But, on the other hand, there are several enormous elm-trees, and one of these is situated from the end of the wall at about the same distance as the door at the other end. This tree is accordingly used as the remaining goal necessary, simply by chalking off a piece to correspond in size to the door at the other end.

Perhaps there is no game in the world which gives such varied opportunities to every kind of strength and agility, separately or combined, as the Wall-game. Thus the players, of whom there are eleven on each side, are divided into four different names or classes, whose functions are wholly distinct—namely, Walls (three), Seconds (two), Outsides (three), and Behinds (three); while of the two latter classes each position requires somewhat different players and duties.

Let us take these classes in the order named. The chief requisite in the 'Walls' is weight and strength, though there is a vast difference between the 'Walls' 'who play with their heads' and those who depend on brute force alone. Thus, while the Oppidan 'Walls,' who are more often than not some of the strongest and heaviest members of the Eton (rowing) eight, generally far outweigh the Collegers opposed to them, the latter very often more than compensate for their deficiency in weight by their superior and more technical knowledge of the game. An Eton 'Wall' attired for the game is indeed a fearful and wonderful sight. His dress consists of a pair of trousers more or less patched, and very likely turned in under the socks; above these of an enormous rough jersey or 'sweater,' well padded at the elbows and in any place where he is most likely to come in contact with the wall; and, lastly, of a wall-cap, which is a thickly-padded cap, with long pendants on each side which fasten down under the chin, and to some extent prevent his ears from being scraped off by the wall! The 'Walls' on each side form down one after the other against the wall, the three on one

side pushing against the other three, and endeavouring when the ball is put in to gain some feet along the wall by sheer brute strength, the first 'Wall' of the three having the wall in front of him. This is almost the sole function of the 'Walls,' excepting in a loose bully, when, of course, they kick the ball if they can towards the enemy's 'calx,' a term which shall be explained presently. The two 'seconds' on each side form down next to the 'Walls,' and the ideal 'second' should be short, sturdy, strong as an ox, and with a neck like a bull. Height combined with strength is a great advantage in a 'Wall,' as it enables him to reach over his opponent and shoulder him from the wall; but

A 'BULLY' NEAR 'CALX'

the 'second' should not exceed 5 ft. 6 in., and probably the best have been a little shorter. I should have said that the 'second' wears a 'Wall' cap, but an ordinary football shirt.

The three 'Walls' and two 'seconds' form the 'bully.' We now come to the 'outsides,' whose duties are totally different, and who are differentiated by the titles of 'third,' 'fourth,' and 'line.' The 'third' on each side stands just outside the 'bully,' ready to dash at the ball the moment it comes out. He should be strongly built and able to stand up against his opponent, but also as quick as lightning. The duties of the fourths are similar to those of the thirds; they stand facing each other, half-way between the 'bully' and the 'side-line.' The 'lines,' as their name indicates,

stand just within the side-line. Strength is not so essential in their position as great quickness and the knack of kicking the ball out of the limits of play in the direction of the enemy's goal.

The game is in one respect very peculiar. Though there are goals at each end, and a goal is the highest score obtainable, it is practically almost impossible to obtain a goal, and 'shies' take their place. At each end of the wall there is a space marked off with a chalk line, hence called respectively good and bad 'calx;' and when one of the opposing elevens has succeeded in getting the ball within the enemy's calx, any member of that eleven can obtain a 'shy' by getting the ball up between his foot and the wall, so that it does not touch the ground, *provided at the same time that his face is turned towards the enemy's goal.* If the ball is got into this position the particular player touches it and calls out 'Got it!' and if the umpire says 'Fair shy' he runs to the outside line and throws the ball with the right hand at the enemy's goal, door, or tree, as the case may be. As, however, the moment the 'shy' is claimed all the opposing side may run out and block up the goal, it is easy to understand why a goal is so rarely obtained. I do not suppose that on the average one is made every year in all the many games that are played at the Wall, and I believe that only once during the annual match of 'Collegers and Oppidans' was a goal secured. This was by Mr. Mordaunt, a Colleger and captain of the Eton cricket eleven, who, afterwards playing for Cambridge, scored a century in the inter-University match. Mr. Mordaunt, indeed, I believe, threw several goals during his Eton career, having developed a knack of throwing the ball with extraordinary skill and swiftness; but as a 'goal-thrower' he stands unique in the history of the game.

H. J. MORDAUNT

It remains to describe the duties of the three behinds (Flying-Man, Long-behind, and Goals). The flying-man stands just behind the bully, at a distance of about six feet, his object being to kick the ball whenever it comes within his reach from out of the bully *over* his own and the enemy's outsides, so that it may drop *outside* the line and roll as far as possible in the direction of the enemy's calx. Here I should say that, while the 'bully' at the beginning of the game and at half-time is formed at the centre of the wall,

on all other occasions it is formed close to the wall in a direct line to the spot where the ball has ceased rolling or has been stopped by the enemy's outsides running out for that purpose. Thus, the most important function of behinds and outsides alike is to 'kick *out*;' and in the case of the flying-man this is a very difficult performance, and it demands exceptional skill to lift the ball over the heads of the combined outsides. Messrs. C. Haig-Brown and P. J. De Paravicini, both also very good on the cricket field, were particularly fine 'flying-men' in their time.

The 'long-behind' stands some paces behind the 'flying-man,' but close to the line, and the 'goals' at an equal distance from him, but in a line with the 'flying-man;' their duties are, of course, equally to kick out, but, as they have generally more time and have not to lift the ball so quickly, they ought to be able to send the ball much farther, unless, of course, the other side should happen to make a run down, in which case their place becomes very responsible. I remember seeing a fine piece of play by Atkinson, the College 'long-behind,' in 1876. One of the Oppidan 'outsides,' Post by name, had got right past the College bully and 'flying-man' and charged Atkinson just as he was kicking the ball. Their feet met together, but Atkinson stuck to his ground, and the result was a magnificent kick, which sent the ball soaring outside the line, and brought the College bully many yards nearer on their way to bad calx, where, if I remember rightly, they obtained several shies. At any rate, they won the match, largely, I think, owing to Atkinson's kick. At this time College won the match on St. Andrew's Day for three years in succession, and, having played in the humble capacity of 'goals' in the last of these three matches, I may be allowed to give some account of it and St. Andrew's Day in general. If it were not, indeed, for the annual match between Collegers and Oppidans, I doubt very much if the Wall-game would continue to flourish. But as it is the only occasion on which Collegers can compete in the football field (they[1] are not permitted to enter for the House Football Cup on the ground of numerical superiority), they are naturally interested in the continuation of the matches. As there are more than 900 Oppidans, it will be seen that the latter have apparently an unfairly large field to select from; but as Collegers begin playing the game from the moment they enter Eton, and as Oppidans only play when they become possible candidates for the Oppidan eleven, the disparity of the Collegers in number

[1] There are seventy scholars in College (to reproduce the number of the seventy disciples), as the twelve Fellows were supposed to represent the twelve Apostles.

is largely compensated for, especially by their great superiority in scientific skill in calx-play.

The day begins with hospitality of the most graceful kind. The two elevens are invited to breakfast by one of the masters (in my time Mr. Frank Tarver, himself a most admirable exponent of the game); and there used to be a story current in college that on one occasion this breakfast had an ominous, not to say disastrous, effect on the fortunes of the game. The report was that the college captain, an enormously heavy 'Wall,' took so kindly to the fare provided, and especially the sausages, that he devoured thirteen of them, and his side were beaten by exactly that number of shies! But whether the sausage story be true or not, I believe there is no doubt of the fact of the defeat by that particular number of points.

The match, however, does not begin till 12.30; but long before that time a continuous file of Etonians and O. E.'s streams down to College Field, where, parallel to the wall and the outside line, but some distance from it, a long boundary is roped and staked off to give free play for the ball to travel, while all the actual ground used for play has been covered with sawdust. This, with the fact that a brand-new ball is used, makes the play uncommonly fast, but of course this is the same for both sides, though rather hard on a nervous 'behind' who is playing in the match for the first time, and may only get one kick to make or mar his reputation.

By about a quarter-past twelve the rival elevens are both on the ground, the Collegers' colours being purple and white in narrow lines (the purple being, I suppose, in memory of the royal founder, Henry VI.), and the Oppidans in purple and yellow in broad stripes. A minute or two before the half-hour the rival 'walls' and 'seconds' form down at the middle of the wall, the 'outsides' and 'behinds' take their respective places, and, as the College clock strikes, the ball is put in by the umpire, usually one of the masters who has probably captained the Collegers some years previously. By this time the boundary stakes are one long line of spectators, and almost immediately after the first 'bully' is formed shouts of 'Cóllegérs!' 'Óppidáns!' arise, and continue more or less vehemently throughout the match, particularly if it be a good one.

In the match of 1878, of which I am particularly thinking, the College eleven was a distinctly good one, especially in 'seconds' and 'outsides.' The seconds, indeed, Bridges and Chitty, were, I suppose, as good a pair as ever represented either side; the

former, who was our captain, had his whole soul and life in the game, and was naturally eager to end his career by winning the match. College began by kicking towards bad-calx, as the tree-end is called, and gained a little at starting. After about ten minutes there was a fierce loose-bully, out of which the ball came to Anderson, the leading Oppidan 'second' and a very good man in his place, and almost as keen on the game as his opponent Bridges. Anderson ran down with the ball, and sent me—the 'goals'—a cool runner, which I stopped with my hands (a 'behind' is allowed to catch the ball when it is off the ground and drop-kick it), but as he seemed to me to be 'sneaking,' *i.e.* to be in

THE LINE OF SPECTATORS

front of his own side when he got the ball, I did not kick it at once, expecting a bully to be claimed. As, however, no one called out 'sneaking,' and he was running full tilt at me, I drop-kicked the ball, but in my hurry did not sufficiently 'place' it, and it came down *just* inside the line, at which I remember our 'long-behind' turned round and abused me like a pickpocket! However, as a matter of fact the kick could not have turned out more fortunately for us. I have already said we had three excellent 'outsides.' It was A. H. Clough, if I remember rightly, who dropped on the ball as it came down, and he and the other 'outsides,' admirably backed up by the rest of the bully, ran the ball

down from the centre of the wall right into bad calx, where two or three shies were speedily obtained. It is eighteen years ago since that victorious rush took place, but I can still see the eddying forms of the College bully intermingled with their opponents as they swept the ball right down, through 'outsides' and 'backs,' into the Oppidan calx. We got in all nine shies, some in bad, and some (after half-time) in good calx, and I remember rather a dramatic incident occurred in the middle of the game. Rogers, our third 'wall,' had not yet received his colours, though, of course, he was wearing them for the match, but just as the bully was forming down, Bridges, who was in a state of huge delight, gave them to him in the well-known formula, 'You can have your College Wall,' at which Rogers was promptly congratulated by the Oppidan 'wall,' who was forming down opposite to him.

After half-time the Oppidans did their best to 'hold the ball,' *i.e.* prevent it from getting away from the wall, in order that they might hinder us if possible from getting into good calx, and so obtaining more 'shies.' However, at last our 'walls' succeeded in turning it out, and some time before the half-hour we got into calx and added still further to our score. The last bully was formed in calx just before the half-hour, which struck a minute or two afterwards, and then occurred a bully, unique, I should think, in the history of the game. For twenty minutes the Oppidans vainly endeavoured to 'furk' the ball out, for twenty minutes our bully were equally unsuccessful in getting a shy, till at last, at ten minutes to two, the ball rolled out over the line, and the match was at an end, 'bar the shouting,' which, so far as College is concerned, is by no means the least important feature of the day, especially when a win occurs. As each member of the eleven enters College Hall he is vociferously cheered, knives, forks, and glasses being hammered on the tables to enhance the effect, while later on the whole of the victorious team are 'hoisted' round College Hall with shouts and rejoicing.

After the match on St. Andrew's Day the interest in the Wall-game passes away till the next season comes round again, excepting so far as the formation of the 'Mixed Wall Eleven' is concerned. This is composed half of Collegers and half of Oppidans, and the colours (blue and red in stripes) being a 'school' as opposed to a 'house' 'colour,' were highly prized. The greater majority of these colours were given directly after the match, and all the new members religiously sported their new caps at the Oxford and Cambridge match, which always takes place in School Field on the afternoon of St. Andrew's Day.

The last members of the team, however, only receive their colours a few days later, and great is the joy of the recipient on hearing, for the first time, that he may wear school colours. I well remember how, on going into hall a few days after the match referred to, I received a message from Bridges that he wanted to see me in his room, and my equal amazement and delight when, on the very threshold, I heard the magic words, 'You may get your Mixed Wall,' and how fervently the stereotyped and traditional reply, 'Oh! thanks awfully,' was uttered. It was partly the fact that I was the only member of the team but one who was not leaving, and, therefore, was bound to be 'keeper' (*i.e.* captain) of College Wall next year, and partly the happy issue to my misplaced kick above mentioned that led to my getting these colours a year before I expected them.

A few words may be said about the training which a Colleger has to go through before he can possibly expect to wear the purple and white on St. Andrew's Day. It is certainly very thorough, and entails a good deal of strict, but I think wholesome, discipline. Three times a week on every whole schoolday afternoon for about his first two football terms, the youthful Colleger has to play at the Wall in Chamber game, as the junior game of all is called. I did not develop any capacity as a 'behind' for some years, and oh! how I hated the dreary monotony of playing 'outside' or perhaps even 'second' in a place for which I was wholly unsuited! I don't suppose my case was at all exceptional, for I fancy most youthful Collegers, excepting perhaps a born 'second' such as Bridges, cordially detest Chamber game. After two or three years one gets drafted into Lower College game, and then one probably begins to have some idea of the place for which one is best suited, and to feel a nascent interest in the game, which becomes tremendously keen as soon as one begins to have the least expectation (an expectation one would not for worlds divulge) of eventually playing on St. Andrew's Day. For the last two or three years of his Eton life the Colleger who shows any promise is promoted to the Head or College game, and occasionally even earlier, and the strict discipline he has gone through (shirking being punishable by a severe caning) produces its desired result in a very thorough and scientific knowledge of the game, especially amongst the 'walls' and 'seconds' in all matters pertaining to calx play. When one is finally lucky enough to be a member of the St Andrew's Day XI., one's devotion to the game is intense and perfected: all the members of the team are expected to put themselves into a sort of training by avoiding late hours, &c., and

the night before the match the whole eleven meets in a certain large room in 'lower passage' to hear a final oration from the captain.

Amongst the best exponents of the Wall-game at Eton from 1868 to 1878 there have been several who have already gained distinction in other walks of life; and this is particularly true of headmasters. Besides the headmaster of Eton, there are Etonians masters of Harrow (Rev. J. E. C. Welldon), Haileybury (Hon. and Rev. E. Lyttelton), and Uppingham (Rev. E. C. Selwyn). All three at one time played on St. Andrew's Day; while Welldon and Lyttelton were, the one for the College and the other for the Oppidan XI., almost as fine 'flying-men' as the Wall-game has ever produced. Amongst politicians the Hon. Alfred Lyttelton, M.P. for Warwick and Leamington, may be mentioned as an 'outside' of exceptional brilliancy, while a little later J. R. Harmer, now Bishop of Adelaide, was a valuable and sturdy 'fourth' on the College side. The medical profession claims Dr. E. C. Perry, senior classic at Cambridge, and a most hard-working and scientific 'wall.' I cannot resist recalling a slight anecdote in connexion with Dr. Perry's name. He had set his fag, E. M. Wood, the usual penalty of 'thirty lines' for being 'late for Hall.' An epigram was, however, allowed instead; and the following witty though somewhat cheeky epigram was accordingly shown up:

J. E. C. WELLDON
(HEADMASTER, HARROW)

There was a boy in high position,
Whene'er he made a joke,
Περὶ was his preposition
So *roundabout* he spoke.

HON. E. LYTTELTON
(HEADMASTER, HAILEYBURY)

In consideration of the neatness of the production, the dose of cane which its cheekiness deserved was not administered.

A good deal has been said of late years about the pursuit of athletics, and especially football, being carried to excess at our public schools, and strong words have been used about 'compulsory' football in particular. I do not think that, except in one instance which occurs to me, any case has really been made

out. In ninety-nine cases out of a hundred, I believe that football, and compulsory football too, is a most valuable training, not only physically, but also because it teaches to some extent the art of 'roughing it' to a class who otherwise would have very little opportunity for learning that most valuable of lessons. But here, as generally, 'the exception proves the rule.' There occasionally enters a school—Shelley is the conspicuous instance at Eton—a boy who, peculiarly gifted by nature in some one or other respect, is peculiarly unsuited for the rough-and-ready tumble of public-school life, and especially for the generally wholesome, but, in a case like this, cramping and narrowing régime of compulsory games. I doubt very much whether such boys should be sent to a public school at all. Surely it would be wiser if his tutor, on discovering such a boy, were to advise his removal to a more suitable if less bracing moral atmosphere. But for the majority of boys I feel sure that football is a splendid thing, and I doubt whether the enthusiasm with which it is pursued is really at all a disadvantage. It is well to be enthusiastic about something; and if a good deal of conversation is devoted to 'football shop' at a public school, if it were not for football, conversation of a much less harmless character might very probably more often occur.

E. C. SELWYN
(HEADMASTER, UPPINGHAM)

Even if pure football enthusiasm be slightly overdone at school, we have all of us seen enough 'to put away childish things' when we go out to fight the battle of life; and I rather believe that the fact of having acquired a genuine enthusiasm even for a sport like football has some effect in imparting thoroughness to whatever else may be pursued in after life. This idea seems admirably hinted at in the last line but one of a verse from Mr. E. E. Bowen's poem, 'Forty Years On,' with which I may not unfitly conclude:

Forty years on, growing older and older,
Shorter in wind as in memory long,
Feeble of foot and rheumatic of shoulder—
What will it help you that once you were strong?
God give us bases, to guard and beleaguer,
Games to play out, whether earnest or fun,
Fights for the fearless, and goals for the eager,
Twenty and thirty and forty years on!

THE CROSS-BROWED BUCK

BY HORACE HUTCHINSON

BEFORE the days of the Deer Removal Act of 1851, the fallow deer in the New Forest were very much more numerous than they are to-day. To-day, in the eye of the law, there are no deer, though in fact there are enough to afford the New Forest Hounds abundance of sport. The law, however, takes no cognisance of them. That is not to say that any man that pleases may poach them. No man may shoot in the Forest unless he hold the twenty-pound licence. The Deputy-Surveyor is an exception ; but of the kind that proves the rule. The licensee is forbidden expressly to shoot the deer, and for the rest, if the deer, when alive, are not protected from the poacher, there is a property in venison, so that he who carries off a carcase is robbing the Crown, however the law would regard or disregard his action in turning deer into venison.

But it was many years before the removal of the deer by Act of Parliament that the incidents of the following story happened. The deer were then ubiquitous in the Forest, a constant temptation to the commoner, and a temptation which social opinion did not aid him to resist. In fact, the Forest was peopled by a kindly, a courteous, but a law-breaking folk, many of them smugglers and few of them innocent of the less felonious crime of poaching. Of the minority, who took no active part in either of these pleasant pastimes, none, perhaps, were not in perfect sympathy with those that followed them—none were above receiving, as a reward for their kindly silence about unlawful enterprises, an occasional tub of spirits that had not paid duty, discovered, in the grey light of dawn, on the doorstep, or a haunch of venison laid secretly by night upon the window-sill.

At this time there was great talk in the Forest of a certain buck of fine bulk and antlers, especially distinguished from his

fellows by a white 'blaze' on his forehead, which was said to bear a singular likeness in its outline to the Cross, which is the sacred emblem of Christianity.

Of his practical immunity from harm it seemed unnecessary to argue. It had been proved so often. It was not that many of them—at first at all events—had been deterred, out of respect to this singular marking of his brow, from trying to kill him. Special orders had been issued to the keepers by the Lord Warden for his destruction. This great official, on hearing of the unique 'blaze' on the buck's forehead, had wished for such a trophy as the head to put up in his hall. But though several of the keepers, noted shots—men who 'were never known to miss,' as the phrase goes—had fired at him, none had been able to boast that they had even touched him. And this was the more singular on account of the curious habit of the beast, noticed before, of standing at gaze, as it were, staring at the object of its attention, and thus offering the steadiest of marks.

The general opinion had just settled down to this satisfactory conclusion, when the King happened to pay one of his very occasional visits to the Forest, and was presented, according to time-honoured custom, with a pair of white greyhounds in silver couples. He made no use of his present in venery, as his Norman predecessors would no doubt have done; but his august interest was aroused by the stories concerning the cross-browed buck, and led to his expressing a wish—at once overruling that of his Lord Warden—to possess this wonderful head. He caused proclamation to be made that whomsoever should shoot the cross-browed buck, and present his body to the King, should be held guiltless of offence against the Forest laws, and, further, should be rewarded handsomely.

The proclamation, as was but natural, caused a mighty flutter among the inhabitants of the Forest. The keepers were not a little troubled by it, foretelling—what afterwards occurred—that every poacher in the country (and who in that country was not a poacher?) would now prowl fearlessly down all the by-ways of the woods, gun in hand, on the pretence of searching for the cross-browed buck.

George Wake, as a 'character' in the Forest, was only a little less famous than the cross-browed buck. His mother was a gipsy woman of remarkable beauty, even now that she was past the middle age. As a girl she had married Wake, the father of George, in opposition to all the wishes and all the traditions of

her tribe. In those days the gipsies were much more jealous than they are now in preserving the purity of their blood; the law of custom was stringent that Egyptian should marry Egyptian, and not form alliances with the outer world; but this Wake had been a Saxon. Himself fascinated by the girl's bold beauty, he had gained her heart by many woodland graces—by his skill in the poaching and illicit traffic, by his beauty and his gallantry, by the music that he won from his ancient fiddle; in fine, by many various gifts that go to take the affections of a rural belle.

So she married him; and from that day the pair lived a life rather apart from their fellows, for the tribe disowned the girl at once, and even in those old days the majority of the white folk did not care to put themselves quite on the level of the nomads. They lived apart, but they lived happily and lovingly, and concerned themselves a good deal about the up-bringing of George, who was their only son. He inherited his mother's dark beauty, and his father's taste for simple melody on the violin. His education consisted chiefly of instruction in the lore of the woodlands, with a smattering of astrology picked up from his mother, whose facility in telling fortunes had helped out the family purse not a little. The father had done scarcely any steady work—what child of the New Forest does?—but what with their common rights of fuel and grazing, and the succession of odd jobs that the peculiar nature of the country affords, the family had never known the pinch of poverty. The great stand-by, however, and main source of income had been the deer-stealing. Venison had been the chief nutriment of George Wake's youth, and the portions that the family were not able to eat were disposed of to an easy-going butcher in Winchester on terms advantageous to buyer and seller alike.

So George Wake, assimilating, with each mouthful that he ate and each breath that he drew, the love of venery and the spirit of the greenwood tree, grew to walk in the path that his father had trod before, paying, however, less attention to the contraband trade, which became constantly more perilous and less profitable as the numbers of the 'preventers' increased, and the duties on alcoholic liquors diminished. When his father died, he found himself, at the age of eighteen, with a fund of learning that sufficed to tell him very approximately, from the size of a deer's 'slot,' the size, weight, and age of the animal, and to equip him with many and divers means for accomplishing its destruction. Of material goods that were his at his father's death, besides the cottage, with its attendant common rights, in which he continued

to live with his mother, there devolved to him, as residuary legatee, his father's famous gun of wonderful mechanism. This weapon could be unscrewed into three several pieces, of a size convenient for stowing away in the secret pockets contrived in different parts of his garments by his mother's skill. With the portions of this gun concealed about his person, he would walk boldly into the bar of the 'Greenwood Tree,' or other hostelry of the Forest, where the very keepers themselves would be taking their share of spirits that had paid no duty to the King. He would laugh and chaff with them, for he was all men's, and especially all women's, favourite, and then, when they had gone forth on their beats, he would sally out in some direction to which he knew their attentions would not extend, and stalk a fat buck at his leisure. They knew him well for what he was—a poacher, as his father had been before him—but on neither son nor father had they yet laid hands when either was engaged in what could be proved an illegal business. The very cottage had been searched and visited times and again, but all to no purpose. The larder in which the Wakes deposited their venison was a cupboard, so artfully matched with the planking of the walls, false nail-heads being let in to help the illusion, that the keepers had always retired as they had come, baffled, although convinced that their suspicions were well founded.

Men had forgiven George Wake the stain of gipsy in his blood, in virtue of the beauty that it brought him and the charming taste in music whereby he made merry for them with his fiddle in the 'Greenwood Tree.' And if such gifts could win him forgiveness among men, it was little wonder that they won him favour among women. He was a fascinating fellow, with his bold manner of wooing, his coal-black hair, olive tint and flashing eyes. He was accounted the best dancer in the Forest, as well as the best fiddler to the dancing of others; and he had a light, a merry, and a kindly heart, and a presence that seemed to bring sunshine wherever it went.

Latterly, George Wake, too, had taken to himself an ally: he was keeping company with Agnes Kingston, the daughter of Joseph Kingston. landlord of the 'Greenwood Tree.' That is not to say that this was the first time of George Wake's company-keeping in his hot young life. It was not his first experience of the bliss of 'love's young dream;' but whereas hitherto the dream had been brief, with speedy awakening, the present was a strong attachment which had its roots in a better sentiment than passion. Just as Agnes Kingston herself was of gentler and

more refined nature than most of the rustic beauties of George Wake's acquaintance, so his affection for her was of a more refined and more constant quality than the fancies inspired by the coarser light-o'-loves. Agnes's mother was not a forester born, but had been brought by Joseph Kingston out of Winchester, and from her the girl had acquired a taste for reading and elementary culture which put her above her surroundings. She had been confirmed, too, by the bishop himself, and though she was no prude, the rough and ribald jests were hushed to shame by the dignity of the girl's fair beauty as she moved about, serving the guests in her father's hostelry. The girl was attracted to George Wake less by his bold beauty than by the element of romance in his nature, which he had inherited from his mother's people, by his love of music and by all that was more gentle in his character. But if she loved him for those qualities that were his portion from his mother, it did not follow by any means that his mother approved of the gentle girl of her son's choice. Her very gentleness, and the dignity which inevitably had something a little superior in it, were an offence in Mrs. Wake's eyes.

'What,' his mother would ask, 'can you want marrying such a one as she?' scornfully referring to Agnes Kingston. 'What does she know about the deer or the cargo-running? What use would she be to a man as a wife? Why not, rather, Elsie Lee, Josiah Lee's daughter, that is a rich girl and will inherit her father's shooting-gallery? Can shoot herself, too—make the bell ring every time at the end of the tube. Handsome, too; handsome as a picture. Handsome as yourself—a fitting mate for you. Not a white-faced, white-blooded fool like that daughter of the innkeeper. Is it true, what they're telling me, that she's coming the parson over you; preaching to you to give up the smuggling and the poaching, and trying to make you promise to give it up as the price of marrying her?'

'Elsie Lee—pooh!' said the young man in scorn. 'A black-eyed trollop.'

'Is it true?' asked his mother again, raising her voice almost to a scream, and declining to be put off by his scorn of Elsie Lee. 'Is it true, then, that she's preaching to you?'

'And true it is, mother,' the young fellow replied, with a defiance that matched her own tone. 'I've promised her that I'll give up the poaching and marry her so soon as one thing's done—and that is so soon as I've killed the cross-browed buck.'

'The cross-browed buck, indeed,' the mother retorted disdain-

fully. 'And likely it is that you'll be the one to kill the cross-browed buck when you're taken up with philandering after a moon-faced girl like that Agnes Kingston. If it was Elsie Lee now, a girl that can shoot as well as ever your father or yourself, she might be some use to you for the cross-browed buck. And listen to me well, George Wake,' said she, sinking her voice to a whisper, fraught with mysterious meaning, and bringing her dark handsome face close up to his, so that the curls, still coaly black, that strayed from her broad, low forehead, swept his face. 'I tell you I've seen it in the stars, and I tell you I've seen it in the lines of the girl's hand—it's Elsie Lee, Elsie Lee, that'll kill the cross-browed buck—she and no other, and will win the King's bounty for the man she loves. There, I've told you the reading of the signs, and say, tell me, did you ever know me read them false or tell them false?—tell me!'

The young man was evidently staggered by the fierce conviction with which his mother spoke, and impressed by what she said.

Those words of his mother's drove George Wake that very evening to seek the encampment on the boundary road between the counties of Wiltshire and Hampshire, which was the great resort of all the gipsies in the country-side.

There people hailed the return of the prodigal kindly, even Elsie Lee not disdaining to show him a coquettish favour, which seemed to indicate that the sins of his truancy might not be altogether beyond her forgiveness.

'Oh, ho!' she said; 'are you tired of the "Greenwood Tree," or is it the "Greenwood Tree" that's tired of you, George Wake?'

His blood leapt at the girl's challenge. Somehow it was always thus. When he was with Elsie Lee her dark beauty and the flashes of her fine eyes stirred his pulses even more strongly than Agnes Kingston's gentler graces could move them; yet, when he had left the former, he scarcely gave a thought to her, while the image of the latter was always with him, obtruding itself quite unpleasantly sometimes, even when he was in the gipsy girl's company. For several evenings after this first one, just as the peaceful dusk was falling, he wandered over to the gipsies' camp, and strolled with Elsie Lee down the long woodland alleys. For a whole week he avoided the 'Greenwood Tree,' and once, meeting Agnes Kingston along a forester's path, he dived into the thicket, ashamed to meet her. Whether she saw him or not he could not tell, as she passed demurely on past his hiding-place.

Once in the twilight, as he and Elsie sat together in a clearing among the trees and bracken-fern, he with his wicked arm around her consenting waist, and the two dark, handsome faces nearer each other than was absolutely necessary, he saw the expression of her eyes change from softness to anger, and suddenly she drew back from his embrace.

'Look!' she exclaimed.

He looked, following the direction of her glance; but he was too late; the object of her attention had vanished.

'What was it?' he asked.

'What was it?' she echoed with a laugh of scorn. 'It was your friend, your sweetheart, your Agnes Kingston. She was watching us. I saw her milk-white face over the thicket there—there where the path goes. Oh, she is gone now,' she went on, as George Wake started to his feet on the impulse of going after her. 'She is gone now,' the gipsy girl repeated. 'Do you want to go with her? Go, if you like; I do not want you.'

She looked splendid in her anger as she stood scorning him.

'It wasn't that way I was going after her,' George Wake grumbled out as he came back to her side.

'What does she want?' Elsie Lee went on, lashing her heart into a fury. 'What does she want, coming out spying after us—the mean thing; the sly thing; the sneak! How does she dare, the milk-faced devil!'

George Wake laughed, enjoying her jealousy.

'Yes, you may laugh,' she said, turning on him fiercely; 'you may laugh. But I believe you care for that moon-faced, white girl. I know you do. You care for her—tell me that you do.'

'Nonsense, nonsense, Elsie. You know I don't.'

'I believe you do,' she said, in a whisper of hate. 'And I tell you what I will do,' she went on, hissing out her angry words between set teeth—'I tell you what I will do if I see that milk-face again spying on us: I will kill her, I will—I will kill her dead; and I don't care if I swing for it; I don't, so there.'

'Oh, nonsense, Elsie. She didn't mean to be spying most likely. She was just passing along the forest path, I think, and stopped a moment to see who it was. I wonder,' he added a little anxiously, 'if she could see.'

'And do you care?' the girl almost screamed at him; 'do you care whether she saw you? Are you ashamed of me? I believe you are,' she went on, with conviction. 'Yes, I believe you are—you are ashamed of me. Then you can go to her, I tell you. You can go to your white-faced girl. Go to her!—and much good may you both get. Go to her!'

DEALT HIM SO SOUND A CUFF THAT IT BROUGHT HIM UP SHORT

And Elsie Lee, with blazing eyes, turned and went from him through the bracken.

In a few paces he had overtaken her. 'Listen to me, Elsie,' he said; but she went on heedless. 'Listen to me,' he pursued, laying a hand on her shoulder to detain her; and at that she turned about, and, taking him by surprise, dealt him so sound a cuff with her open hand on the side of the face, that it brought him up short, half-stunned for the moment. The next moment he recovered himself enough to give a shout of laughter at the incident, though his cheek still tingled.

'Good night, Elsie Lee,' he called after her cheerily; but she, in her fury, went on without an answer or a look.

'The wild devil!' he commented, as he laid a cool dock-leaf to his cheek, and strode off as much amused as vexed by what had happened.

That night he looked in, for the first time for a week, at the 'Greenwood Tree.' Agnes Kingston met him demurely, distantly rather. He could not make out from her manner whether she had seen who the wooers were in the clearing among the bracken. Her slight coolness might be attributed naturally enough to his truancy. For a fortnight he saw nothing of Elsie Lee, and often dropped in at the inn and gossiped away an hour with Agnes Kingston. Each time that he was with her he came away more and more conscious of the difference between her gentle manner and well-informed talk and the violence and ignorance of the gipsy girl. But still the cross-browed buck remained unslain, and still his mother's fatal reading of the signs came back to him, and her words that Elsie Lee would be the death of the famous buck. He could not understand how that might come to pass. The girl, as they all knew, was a first-class shot, but she confined her shooting to her father's gallery. She could make the bell ring at the end of the long tube every time. Also she could set a good snare for a hare or rabbit, as every other gipsy lad or lass in the Forest could do; but deer, in George Wake's thinking, were a noble quarry reserved for the nobler sex, and he was very sure that she had not the woodcraft required for the stalking of so cunningly elusive a beast as this famous cross-browed buck had proved himself to be. And yet—there was this strange forecast of his mother's! It was not altogether an empty challenge that she had addressed her son, asking if he had ever known her forecasts in error. Whether by confining herself to generalities and ambiguities in her prophecies, or by a happy knack in guessing, she had been right so singularly often that

many others besides her son deemed it both foolish and a little impious to doubt that she was specially inspired.

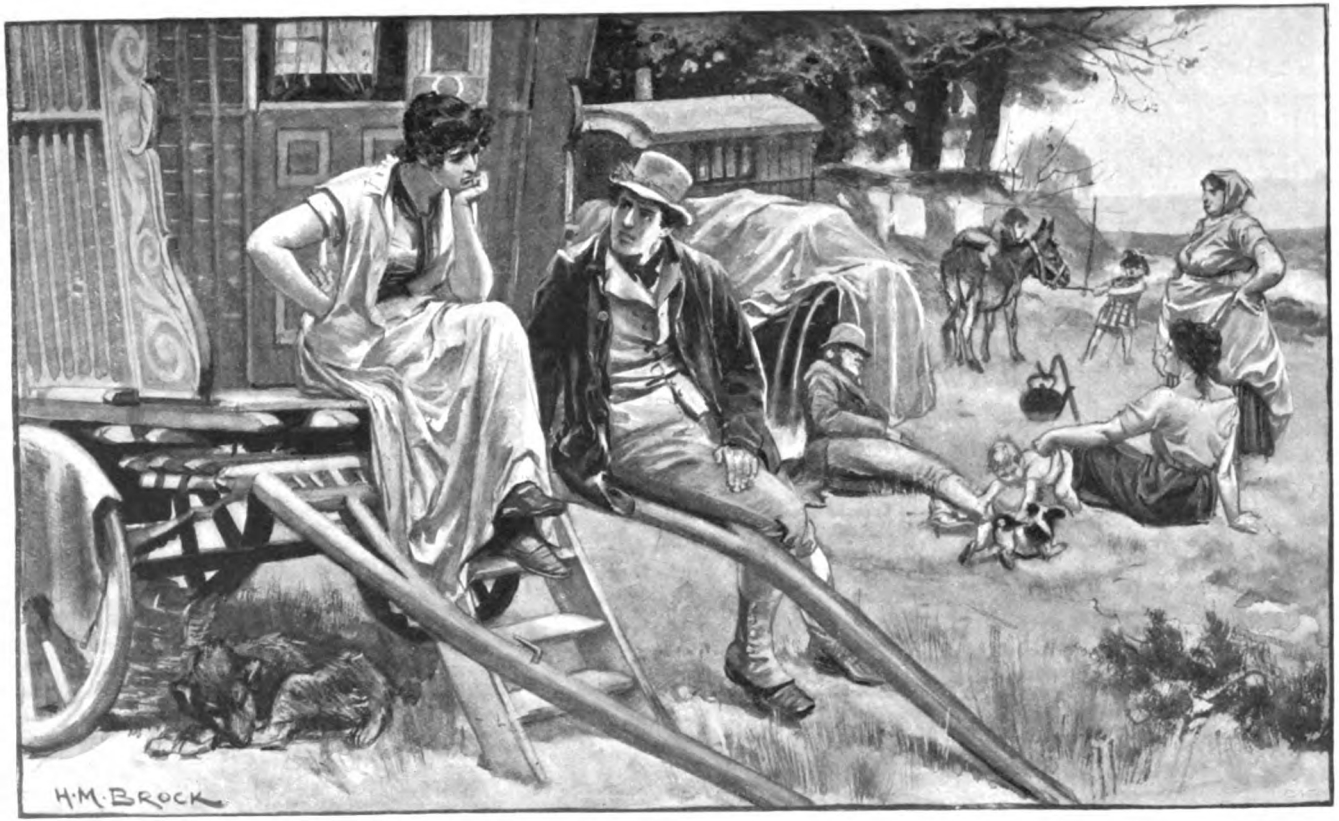
He was beginning to lose all patience with this cross-browed buck. Night after night he went in pursuit of him, following, as it were a will-o'-the-wisp, the tales of his appearance in different and distant parts of the Forest. For it appeared to be the singular custom of the creature to stand motionless, permitting the approach of its enemies until it was noticed, but the moment notice was taken of it to disappear, and to travel immense distances before commencing to browse again. On all sides George began to suffer from the arrows of chaff, men asking him if he had yet slain the cross-browed buck, if he had yet earned the King's bounty. For it was felt that he was the man to earn it if, humanly speaking, it was to be earned at all; for, since his father's death, he was acknowledged to be the best equipped with the hunter's woodcraft of all men in the Forest. The cross-browed buck began to be a very sore point with him, and its mere mention made him cock his eye fiercely, like a terrier dog to whom one has said 'Cats!' Even gentle Agnes Kingston, who asked him in the most innocent way if he had lately seen the buck, he answered with a rough exclamation of impatience that was almost an oath, though commonly he was most courteous and careful with her, whatever he might be with others. But his temper was sore to rawness about the matter at this moment, and that she, of all the world, should seem to gibe him on his ill-success was intolerable to him—she to whom, as he told himself, he owed the ill-success, for had he but been faithful to Elsie Lee—— And his mother's words came strongly back to him.

In the afternoon he strolled over to the gipsies' camp. He gossiped with them an hour, and, as the sun began to fall, tried to persuade Elsie Lee to come with him for a ramble under the trees. But she was exasperated with him, not without cause, and for awhile she would not.

'Why should I go with you?' she said. 'To see your moon-faced girl spying through the bushes again, eh? If you make a meeting with two girls on the one night, you needn't make the meeting of both of them at the one place.'

'Elsie, I swear,' he said, 'that I knew nothing of Agnes Kingston's coming that way that night. I don't know even now whether or no she did come. Maybe it was someone else.'

'Oh, maybe and maybe,' she replied, imitating him. 'Oh, I know your maybes. How am I to know, if I do come with you to-night, that I shan't see that milk-faced girl watching us again?



HE TRIED TO PERSUADE ELSIE LEE TO COME WITH HIM FOR A RAMBLE

I believe you arrange it, you two, to laugh at me, 'cause I can't read in a book like she can.'

'I swear to you,' he said earnestly, 'we've never laughed a word at you, Elsie. And what's more, she's often said as she'd be glad to teach you book-reading, if so be as you'd learn.'

'Damn her and her book-reading! I don't want any of her teaching,' said Elsie, with sudden fury not understood by her wooer. 'If you want me to go along with you to-night, you'll just not say a word to me of your Agnes Kingston.'

''Twasn't me as begun to speak of her, Elsie,' said George Wake; and on these terms of doubtful amity they set out on their stroll.

In the shadow of the first great oak he pieced together and loaded his wonderful gun. He could afford to go about his poaching business with less care for concealment now. He was always after 'the cross-browed buck.'

Then they went along the narrow forest path, side by side, very close together, so that their fingers, of necessity almost, touched, and, equally of necessity as it seemed, having touched, intertwined, and at the electrical contact Wake's hot blood began to leap again under the spell of the girl's glorious dark beauty. And she, on her part, won by his ardour, and loving him as well as her nature admitted of her loving, melted to him; and so they came in true lover-like mood to that clearing among the bracken fern where they had sat before. The fern was all ruddy gold now, with the first touch of autumn, and the foliage was aglow with the warmth of autumnal tints. But the twilight was falling early on the quickly shortening days as Wake and the gipsy girl sat together among the fern.

He laid his gun on the grass behind him, and so they sat in soft sweet dalliance, while the lad's passion grew beneath the glances of those dark, love-lit eyes, and all thought of Agnes Kingston seemed gone from him for ever.

And then Elsie's eyes, even as he gazed into their depths, changed expression. The love light died out of them. She was looking, not into his face, but beyond it, past it; and the eyes which, a moment before, had been filled with the soft radiance of love, now shone with the hard glitter of hate.

'She is there again,' she hissed out, between her clenched teeth, 'your moon-faced girl. You have brought me here again to be mocked by her.'

George turned his head in the direction of the gipsy's angered gaze. For a moment, amid the gathering dusk, he did not make

out the object of her wrath. Then he distinguished, against the shade, the white face watching them. He had already drawn up a leg beneath him to spring to his feet when he was blinded by a rush of flame past his eyes, by a roar, as of thunder, in his ears, followed by a cloud of blue smoke obscuring all.

The gipsy girl had taken his gun and fired it behind his back. She had sprung up and was standing over him, still with the weapon in her hand. Her face expressed a fierce joy, but still her eyes as they gleamed into his wore their look of hate.

'There!' she cried. 'There!—now go to your moon-faced girl—take her in your arms. She cannot be much whiter in death than alive. Go to her!' and she threw down the gun with a wild, hysterical laugh, and rushed off down the forest path.

At the girl's words Wake's heart seemed to stand still. For a moment he gasped, helplessly, with horror, then made his way, slowly, like a man in a trance, to the spot where they had seen the white face watching. He could not have gone faster had he wished it, for all his faculties seemed numbed by the horror of Elsie Lee's deed, and the dread of what he would find behind that thicket of tangled honeysuckle, and bramble, and bracken fern. He knew too well how little likely she was to have missed her mark.

A form lay there—in the lush grass behind the thicket. At sight of it his lips opened in an inarticulate exclamation. The blood that had seemed to cease to flow from his heart came back with a great throb. The next instant he burst into a laugh, which yet was not altogether mirthful; for there, dead, lay the warm body, not of Agnes Kingston, but of a fine fallow buck. He leapt towards it, lifted the antlered head—there, on the brow, was the sacred symbol, the white cross; it was the cross-browed buck. And at the junction of the two lines of the cross, in the very centre, a trickle of oozing blood came from the small hole pierced by the ball fired with Elsie Lee's unswerving aim. He laughed in triumph; but at the tail of his laugh was a note of horror and of dread. He recognised with awe the strange fulfilment of the forecast of his mother, the wise woman; but he recognised with loathing the murderous heart of that other woman who had fired the shot. The white blaze on the face of the deer had sufficed to make it resemble, in the autumn twilight, the white face of a woman watching them.

Springing to his feet he called after the gipsy girl in a terrible voice; but she was far away, and, if she heard him, returned no answer. Nothing remained for him but to make the best of the

I AM ARMED WITH A WARRANT TO ARREST A CERTAIN GEORGE WAKE

situation as he found it; it would be useless for him to think of pursuing the girl into the midst of her own people.

So he gralloched the buck, and, after bestowing the several pieces of his gun in the pockets designed for them, threw the carcase over his shoulder and stepped boldly out with it to the 'Greenwood Tree.' There was no need for secresy. The cross-browed buck had been declared an outlaw by the King's authority; there was no penalty, but a handsome reward, for him who should bring in this noted head.

His reception at the inn partook of the nature of a small triumph. He was overwhelmed with questions about the manner of his stalking and slaying the buck; but his replies to these questions were short, and of a general kind. The buck had stood at gaze, after its manner. A single shot in the brain had sufficed for it. Its slaying had presented no supernatural difficulties. On the whole, the 'Greenwood Tree' felt itself defrauded of the gossip it expected on the occasion of so notable an event as the death of the cross-browed buck.

But Agnes Kingston was very sweet to him. She congratulated him on his triumph, with a demurely modest consciousness of what it might mean for her; for had she not promised to marry him if he would engage to abjure the poaching, and had not he promised to give up the poaching so soon as he should have slain the cross-browed buck? He did not fail to remind her of these mutual undertakings, and with many blushes she acceded to the ratification of the treaty.

Meanwhile it was but natural that the death of this famous quarry, with the King's bounty attaching, should have been made the occasion of much health-drinking and toasting that night. Many came to the 'Tree' on the news of the cross-browed buck's slaying to view the head, and, having seen, they stayed to drink. There was a great merry-making. In the midst of it there stopped at the door a rapidly driven cart, and, immediately following, came a loud knocking, the door was thrown open, and, saying, 'In the King's name,' there strode in an officer of the King's justice, followed by two attendants, and, finally, by Elsie Lee, who cowered in the shadow of the door.

The merry-making and noise were silenced instantly, and the King's officer, to the general consternation, declared, 'I am armed with a warrant to arrest a certain George Wake for the murder of Agnes Kingston done this day in the New Forest. Which is the man?' Then, turning to his attendants, he added, 'Bring forward the girl.'

Elsie Lee was pushed forward by the two men, while all the company looked on in mute surprise.

'That is the man,' she declared in a steady voice, pointing to George Wake; but even as she did so her face blanched, and her arm fell to her side, for there, beside him—safe and unharmed—stood Agnes Kingston, of whose murder by Wake she had given information to the officer, having ridden into Winchester for the express purpose.

'What is this?' asked the officer angrily, seeing by the change of the gipsy girl's manner that something was amiss.

At once there rose a tumult of talk—question and answer—in the inn room; from all of which the official was not long in discovering that the sacred majesty of the law had been made a fool.

'Where is the girl, then?' he asked angrily, when he had come to this conclusion. 'Keep her prisoner,' he said to his attendants.

It was too late. Elsie Lee had taken advantage of the tumult to slip through the door, and to search for her in the Forest was a quest which even the angry official at once saw to be hopeless. Nothing was to be done, and the officers of the law drove back to Winchester empty-handed, as they had come.

After that day no one in the Forest ever saw Elsie Lee again. For a while it was thought she was dead, but a gentleman resident in the Forest, while travelling in Scotland, came upon a camp of gipsies not far from Yetholm, and among them noted one so like in face and figure to Elsie that he spoke to her, referring to the New Forest, and though she went away from him without an answer, he was convinced by her manner, no less than by the likeness, that it was she. She was married to one of the members of this Scottish family of gipsies.

George Wake wedded Agnes Kingston, and resorted to more regular ways of life. It would have needed a more delicate conscience than his to demur at accepting the King's bounty in return for the head of the cross-browed buck; and with this nest-egg on which to begin their married life, they were wealthy, as wealth goes among the children of the New Forest.

AN HISTORIC PACK

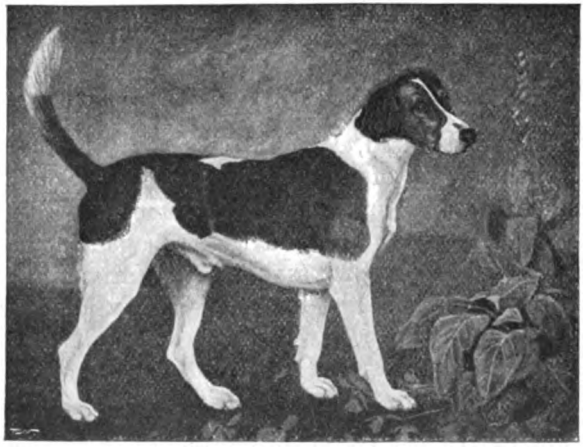
BY GEORGE E. COLLINS

It is generally recognised, I think, that the Brocklesby is the oldest established pack of foxhounds in the kingdom; how old, it is difficult to say. Colonel Cook in his most interesting book, 'Observations on Fox-hunting and the Management of Hounds,' which was published in 1826, says, 'Lord Yarborough's hounds have been kept in a straight line since the year 1700 *certain*; but they *think considerably longer* (more than one hundred and twenty years). The present Smith, Lord Yarborough's huntsman, his father and his grandfather, have hunted the hounds in succession "*from generation to generation.*" The father of the present Smith hunted them fifty-five years without interruption.' The italics are Colonel Cook's, and 'the present Smith,' old Will. Mr. Robert Vyner, in his 'Notitia Venatica,' published in 1849, gives another reference to the antiquity of the pack, and he states that at the time of writing it had been established considerably upwards of a hundred and fifty years. The earliest record is a memorandum, dated 1713, whereby 'it is agreed between Sir John Tyrwhitt of Stanfield, Mr. Robert Vyner, and Mr. C. Pelham, that the foxhounds now kept by Sir John Tyrwhitt and the hounds now kept by the said Mr. Pelham shall be joined in one pack, and each of them, the said Sir John Tyrwhitt, Robert Vyner and Charles Pelham, to have an equal share and interest in the said hounds.' Consequently, Mr. Pelham must have kept hounds before the year 1713.

Whether as Mr. Pelham's or Lord Yarborough's, the pack has always been known as 'The Brocklesby;' it has been in the

hands of the same family practically for two centuries, and manuscript hound-lists are in evidence, too, from 1746 to the present year.

Of the many Brocklesby hounds that have done so much to make fox-hunting history, the first of note is old Rattler, a son of Drunkard and Cleanly, who was whelped in 1752. He was a great hound in old Tom Smith's time, and was thought very highly of by him and other huntsmen. A badly executed portrait hung in the huntsman's cottage at Brocklesby till 1834, when Will had it copied and 'improved upon.' Distemper first broke out in the kennels in 1764, and young Tom lost thirteen couple of hounds by this terrible scourge. Dover, by Driver out of

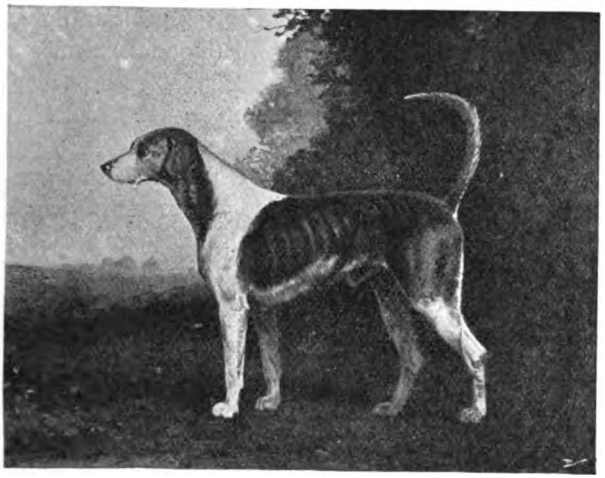


RINGWOOD

Whimsey, who was the sire of Ranter, was bred in 1786, and Red Rose, the dam of that famous hound (by Neptune out of Vestal, and own sister to Ringwood), in 1788.

The celebrated Ringwood was entered in 1788, and his portrait by Stubbs, in 1792, is still in Lord Yarborough's possession at Brocklesby. It is a beautiful painting of a powerful, good-looking foxhound. Ranter, according to a note in Tom Smith's hunting diary for 1790 (the year the hound was bred), was the descendant of a race the blood of which 'has always been reputed for being as stout as, or stouter than, any others in England, in all kennels, particularly by Mr. Meynell and J. Evans of Burton.' He was considered the best hound in England. 'The Druid,' in 'Silk and Scarlet,' writes of him as follows: 'Will Smith, of the Brocklesby, was laid to rest full twelve

years before we ever sallied forth on our summer ramble for "scarlet incidents," and many a cheery story of man and hound has gone with him.' 'Stick to Ranter' was the last kennel injunction he gave to his son Will, as he lay on his death-bed at Barnoldby; and it has not been forgotten either by him or his brother Tom. The original Ranter of 1790 was Dover's son from Red Rose, sister to Ringwood, the hound which Stubbs painted. Fitzwilliam Traitor contributed its Truant in 1797; then came Ranter's and Ringwood's in a long black tan line. Reveller and Relish by Rector by Saville's Rallywood were of Smith's own breeding and great favourites in 1823. Then there were Druid by Flasher, a son of old Furrier; the grey Trimmer,



RALLYWOOD

with his deep note, who found nineteen out of twenty foxes, with the little bitch Prattler, always at his side; and Jailor by Sir Tatton Sykes's Monarch, a very clever hound indeed. None of them could carry a scent as he could through the steam of a hundred horses on the road, and on one occasion he took it half a mile along the top of a sod wall at Croxby Warren, with the pack on both sides, and his great bushy tan stern waving like a banner, till 'the Brocklesby boys were in raptures.'

The first crosses of blood in the Brocklesby pack seem to have come from the Duke of Richmond's (the old Charlton Hunt), Lord Althorp's and the Duke of Grafton's; but there is only occasional evidence of Mr. Hugo Meynell's blood being used before 1800. The great fame of the Belvoir, too, came later on,

and it may be mentioned that it is to the Brocklesby Rallywood that this famous pack owes much of its renown. Rallywood was entered at Brocklesby in 1843, and was by Basilisk—Rosebud, who was also the dam of Ranter (the last hound old Will Smith cheered), Basilisk being by Sir Richard Sutton's Ringwood—Brajela. Rallywood's mask still hangs in Lord Yarborough's study at Brocklesby, not far from the portrait painted by Ferneley.

'The Druid,' speaking of this famous hound, says: 'Yarborough Rallywood, who has virtually made the Belvoir kennel what it is, never ran to head, but always got to the end of great runs. He was very long and low, the exact image of the Ringwood that Stubbs painted for Brocklesby, and with somewhat round quarters, which made him rather the harrier, and although good twenty-three, he was mean to those who like a big hound. In fact, he was quite a *multum in parvo*, and Will (Goodall) thus summed up his merits in the last sentence of the last letter he ever wrote us: "He was *the lowest* dog I ever saw in my life, with the largest fore-rib, combined with a beautiful neck and shoulders, and a pleasing, intelligent countenance." Old Will Smith wanted the Belvoir Grappler and said, "I'll give you anything in the kennel for him," and Will selected Rallywood, in spite of his broken thigh. This exchange was never made, owing to Smith's untimely death, and Grappler died at Belvoir; but the negotiations were renewed with young Will Smith, and he sent Rallywood, by whom he had at one time about fourteen couple of working hounds, and got Trouncer in exchange, and then Raglan by Rustic, whom he liked no better. Will was so fond of his prize when he at last got hold of it, that fifty-three couple of his puppies, from ten couple of "the very best stuff" in the kennel, were sent out in the second season. He came to Belvoir in 1851 at nine years old, and was worked a whole season. When he died in 1853, he found a fitting necropolis in the centre of a flower-plot in Will's garden; a red currant tree now blooms over his remains.' Ambrose, a son of the Belvoir Senator, was the favourite home-bred sire at the close of this huntsman's career, and it is curious to note how many of the present Brocklesby pack run back to this strain. I am now walking two puppies by Acrobat out of Welladay, by Lord Willoughby de Broke's Wildboy, and the Ambrose blood crops up no fewer than four times in the pedigree.

The first Brocklesby huntsman that we know of was Tom Smith, and, with the exception of one season, when Philip Tocock hunted the hounds, the Brocklesby horn was carried by a Smith for upwards of a hundred and fifty years. I cannot find when

the first Tom Smith came to Brocklesby, but he was succeeded by his son Tom in 1761. Lord Yarborough has a picture in his possession of the two Tom Smiths, father and son, and a hound called Wonder (by Tattler—Trickster and bred in 1770), which was painted by Stubbs in 1776. The second Tom Smith was huntsman for fifty-five years, and when the then Lord Yarborough surrendered the mastership to his son, the Hon. C. A. Pelham, the old huntsman handed over the horn to *his* son Will at the same time. As a token of the esteem

TOM SMITH, JUN., HUNTSMAN TO THE BROCKLESBY FROM 1761 TO 1816, AND TOM SMITH, SEN., WITH WONDER

in which he was held by his master, he was presented with a handsome silver cup, which was handed to him by Master C. A. Pelham, the old Lord's grandson, and the grandfather of the present earl. On the cup was the following inscription: 'The gift of Lord Yarborough to his huntsman, Mr. Thomas Smith, after having been more than fifty years in his service, made as an acknowledgment of that indefatigable and unremitting attention to the business of his vocation, which may be recommended for a pattern to those who succeed him and can never be surpassed,

1816.' On the reverse side are the following lines from Somerville's 'Chase:'

> With silence lead thy many coloured hounds,
> In all their beauty's pride. See how they range!
> Dispers'd how busily, this way and that,
> They cross, examining with curious nose
> Each likely haunt. Let all be hush'd,
> No clamour loud, no frantic joy be heard;
> Lest the wild hound run gadding o'er the plain
> Untractable, nor hear thy chiding voice.

The Brocklesby must have shown capital sport at the beginning of the century, to judge from Will Smith's diaries, which, dating from 1816, are full of interesting matter. I may give a few examples. The cub-hunting season of 1819 was exceptionally bad, owing to the dry weather, and there was not one good day's sport; hounds were frequently taken home and given walking exercise. 'In my opinion,' says the old huntsman, 'hounds are better at home than hunting in very dry, bad scenting weather.' As if to make amends, the regular season was brimful of good things. The date of the opening day varied from October 15 onwards. On December 3, 1819, they had a capital run of two hours and forty minutes, the hounds having to be stopped at dark when 'on capital terms with their fox and carrying a good head;' they had changed once. On the next day, too, they ran a fox for an hour and twenty-five minutes, changed, and ran another for fifty-five minutes, eventually marking him to ground. 'A great many horses were beat!' Several more good days are chronicled, and the number of the slain at the end of the season amounted to 113.

Will had a bad fall on November 6, 1820, which incapacitated him from hunting for several days; and in 1830 he had another, which enabled him during the enforced idleness to pen his 'Thoughts on Hunting, and various other Subjects.' I notice that jealousy was not altogether unknown in those days, for Will frequently adds to the account of the day's doings a memorandum to the effect that 'the hounds were shamefully overridden by gentlemen.'

On December 18, 1820, they had a grand run of three hours, ending in blood; and on January 20 of the following year they ran a fox for an hour and forty minutes from Keelby Sprothorns, and killed him in the dark at Scartho village. They had a very hard day on February 2, and at six o'clock at night were

twenty-three miles from home, as the crow flies. Smith rode his own horse to a standstill, so he bled and left him with a gentleman who furnished him with another, and although it was nearly dark he was anxious to kill his fox, who was just in front of hounds; however, a fall settled the matter, and some of the field stopped the hounds. They were then at Cawthorpe, below Louth. Will incidentally mentions the 'Steeple Race' between Mr. Thomas Brooks and Mr. Field Nicholson, which took place on March 30, 1821, from North Thoresby Mill to Aylesby Church, more than a nine-mile point. Mr. Nicholson brought

WILL SMITH, HUNTSMAN TO THE BROCKLESBY FROM 1816 TO 1845, WITH WILL MASON, FIRST WHIP

with him on his return from Melton Mowbray a mare of whose abilities he entertained a great opinion, so it is not to be wondered that a match was soon arranged. He and Tom Brooks had been boys together, and keen rivals for the laurels of the hunting-field; so when Tom taunted him that his was 'a nice bagman's mare,' and offered to run him ten miles within the month for 50*l.* a side and the honour of the old country, matters were soon settled. There were some seventy or eighty fences to be jumped, and the whole country-side turned out to see one of the first steeplechases ever run in Lincolnshire. Mr. Brooks rode a mare belonging to Mr. Frank Iles, by Pilgrim out of a Devi-sing mare, and she had

to thank her opponent for a lead over the brook at Ashby, up to which point the two horses kept together; but they parted at Barnoldby, and the descendant of Eclipse landed Mr. Brooks an easy winner.

Curiously enough, Will killed just as many foxes that season as in the previous one. The best things of 1821–22 were a run on December 3, which is described as very severe, but no time is given; and one of two hours and forty-five minutes on the last day of the season (April 23). Hounds were stopped at dark; all the horses were very beat, and the one Mr. George Skipworth was riding dropped dead. During that season hounds were out 105 times, killed 128 foxes, ran 41 to ground, lost 84, stopped hounds from 33, and there was one blank day.

Will Smith's love of hunting and everything connected with it was only equalled by his affection for his old master. He studied every detail of the chase, both in the field and the pages of the best writers of the day. Somerville was Will's great authority, and quotations from his poem frequently occur in his 'Thoughts on Hunting,' in which he states that the old Lord's ideas (great-great-grandfather of the present Earl) were akin to those of the poet. Quietness with hounds was one of Lord Yarborough's great maxims, and one that many modern huntsmen might bear in mind. The Earl was a keen observer of all that was going on, never missed a good point or a fault and a skirter or a babbler immediately left the Brocklesby kennels. In the kennels nothing escaped him; the old huntsman said that he could discover an imperfection quicker than anyone he ever knew.

Lord Yarborough preferred a medium-sized hound to any other, had a rooted objection to 'lumber,' and used often to say that 'a little, powerful hound could last much longer than a big one.' He liked his hounds dressed when possible, and frequently observed, with a shrug of his shoulders: '*I* always like a clean shirt.'

The old Lord rarely interfered with his huntsman, beyond giving his advice, and then he would conclude by saying, 'Do as you like; but I should do so and so.' Will said that, coming from such a perfect judge as his Lordship, the advice was always acted on; and the old huntsman acknowledges his indebtedness to him for many a valuable lesson, considering that, with the exception, perhaps, of his master's old friend Meynell, there has been no greater authority on hunting than he since Somerville.

Lord Yarborough had a very high opinion of Meynell, and used to say that no one had his field under better control. 'His manners,' said his Lordship, 'were so essentially those of a gentleman, that no man would wilfully or willingly offend him.' The old Lord was a fine horseman, and an exceedingly hard man to hounds. Will considered that he had the lightest hands he ever saw, and his seat on horseback was so graceful that, even when quite an old man, one would have set him down as being about thirty-five years of age, if riding behind him. He had few equals either as a sportsman or a finished horseman, yet he had a very poor opinion of his own capacity.

The first Tom Smith was also a very fine horseman, and so was Will's father, but the latter made hounds his especial study, and was probably without a superior in his day. He had a strong, clear, musical voice and a pleasant manner with hounds; and a powerful constitution enabled him to ride hard all his life. He went remarkably well even with the burden of seventy-two years on his shoulders; but two more seasons saw the finish, after fifty-nine years of service at Brocklesby. He began to whip-in to his father when fourteen years of age. The second Tom Smith rarely carried a horn. 'It only served to spoil his musical voice,' said his son; 'but very few can blow a horn well, though they are a great deal too much used in the field at this time. (This is my opinion; perhaps I am wrong.)' Memo. for young huntsmen!

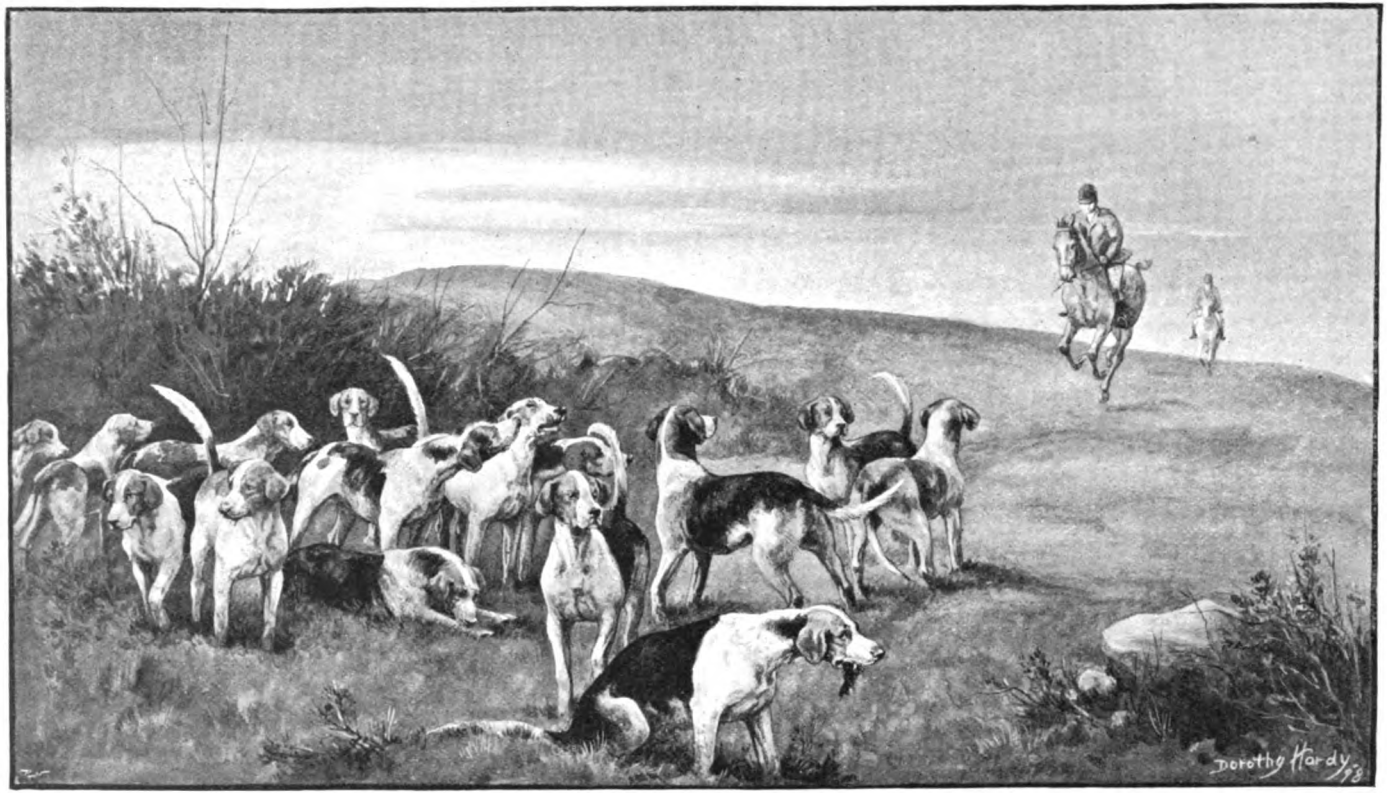
Will was fifty-six when the melancholy accident at Barnoldby sent to his long rest one of the best huntsmen who ever blew a horn or cheered a hound. One can almost picture the scene. The pack hunting a cold line up the slope from Bradley Wood to Barnoldby Church, and Will a bit puzzled with the high hedges of the small enclosures in the village. The ploughboy holloas forward as the beauties unravel the tangle, till his favourite hits it off up the hedge-side, and that musical voice rings out its last cheer of 'Yoich Ranter, boy!' A small hedge lets him into the garden, then that shifty Waverley horse blunders at the next little fence, and sends the huntsman, who has never taken his eyes off the hounds, over his head; he turning a complete somersault and falling on his back. Black in the face, a dislocation of the vertebræ had brought on complete paralysis of every limb; and though he lingered for five days in the house of Mr. Richard Nainby, the inevitable end came at last after a perfect death in life.

On the spot where he fell, beneath the shade of Barnoldby

Church, and in a field belonging to Mr. Richard Nainby, a granite obelisk has been erected by the followers of the hunt; but the name of Will Smith will be associated with the Brocklesby, without this reminder, for all time. His portrait was painted by W. Davis.

The second Will Smith reigned at Brocklesby from 1845 till 1856; one of his sons is the popular Bramham Moor huntsman of to-day, and another lives at Kirmington, ever ready for a cheery yarn of man, horse or hound. Tom Smith, brother of the former huntsman, who had been hunting hounds for Lord Southampton previously, carried the horn till 1862; then came Philip Tocock for a year, and Will gave up his farming for one more season with the old pack.

Under Nimrod Long, who was at Brocklesby from 1864 till 1877, the reputation of the pack was fully maintained, and the sport provided of the best. Long was a fine horseman and a bold rider. Alfred Thatcher was huntsman till 1881, and George Ash, now with the Holderness, till 1884; then came one of the greatest huntsmen and houndmen of modern times. Under Will Dale Lord Yarborough's hounds were raised to a very high pitch of excellence, and no finer than the dog pack, sold to Lord Lonsdale in 1895, and the present pack of bitches, could a man wish to possess. Lord Lonsdale has since sold the dog pack to Mr. Merthyr Guest, and they will doubtless make many a Blackmore Vale fox cry 'Capevi,' and leave their mark in the kennels too. Dale comes of an old fox-hunting family, and, to use his own expression, 'has done nothing else all his life.' As a boy of ten he was whipping-in to his father, who was then huntsman to the Surrey Union foxhounds. Serving under such masters of the art as Jack Morgan of the Rufford, and Mr. F. Saville Foljambe of the Burton, he acquired an amount of hound-lore that stood him in good stead when he came to Brocklesby; and now that he has gone to the Badminton, another historic pack, I have little doubt that his knowledge of hound-breeding will have a beneficial influence in the kennels over which Lord Worcester so ably presides. Many a rare gallop has Will given us, and mention must be made of one or two. I was not out, unfortunately, on the day of the great run from Kirton Lindsey, on November 12, 1895, of which Dale thinks so highly, placing it among the best in his recollection; but an eight-mile point in forty minutes, over such a country, speaks for itself. Only he and Jim Smith, the present Brocklesby huntsman, saw anything of the run, and the hounds had eaten their fox when they arrived on the scene.



'THE HOUNDS HAD EATEN THEIR FOX WHEN THE HUNTSMAN ARRIVED ON THE SCENE'

We had a good gallop on February 20, 1892, when we ran a fox from Sedge Cop Gorse into the Burton country, and pulled him down in the open at Holton Beckering, over a seven-mile point, another mile and a half as hounds went, and the time just fifty minutes, including a pause at Wickenby Wood. On March 5, 1894, we ran an afternoon fox from Milner's Wood, Brocklesby, on to the sands at Cleethorpes, where scents other than vulpine prevented the desired finale; and on another occasion, during the season 1895-96, we ran a good fox for three hours, but lost him at the finish. We roused him at Irby Holme, and sent him

JIM SMITH, HUNTSMAN TO THE EARL OF YARBOROUGH'S HOUNDS, WITH ACROBAT AND HARLEQUIN

a cracker over Barnoldby's 'sweet vale' to Bradley Wood, drove him straight through to Scartho, and thence right-handed to Waltham; then he turned over Barnoldby, Brigsley, Ashby, Fenby and Grainsby, crossed the Barton Street at Hawerby, and after traversing Wold Newton and Binbrook, gave us the slip at Kelstern. The latter part was run slowly. He was viewed by more than one pair of eyes at Irby, Bradley, Ashby and Binbrook, and their owners vow we did not change.

The present huntsman, Jim Smith, has his laurels yet to earn, and though the bearer of a great name in connexion with

the Brocklesby, is, I believe, no relation to the old family; but he has shown us some capital sport during his first season, and killed 36½ brace of foxes. Smith learnt to ride under Mr. J. Maunsell Richardson, and rode second horse to him when that gentleman hunted the hounds during Lord Yarborough's minority. He entered Lord Yarborough's service in 1884, and rode Will Dale's second horse till 1889, when he was promoted to the post of second whipper-in. He filled a similar position with the Blankney the following season, and two seasons later became Ben Capell's first lieutenant. Having picked up many a wrinkle under that fine huntsman, I have no doubt, he returned to Brocklesby in 1894, stepping into Will Dale's shoes two seasons later. Being possessed of the greatest admiration both for the man and his methods, Smith is now doing his best to follow in the footsteps of as good a model of a huntsman the young aspirant to field and kennel honours could have.

The Brocklesby Hunt Club, which was formed at Caistor in 1835, did much in the way of bringing out hunters with an extra turn of speed. It started with a roll of fifty-four members; the annual subscription was a guinea, and the club funds were to be devoted to whatever the bulk of the members thought fit. Mr. Tom Brooks was its first Chairman, and Mr. W. Torr, junior (to whom 'The Druid' dedicated 'Silk and Scarlet'), was the first Honorary Secretary and Treasurer. There was a dinner every year, generally at the George Inn, Caistor, the tickets being 7*s.* 6*d.* each, and members were each fined 3*s.* for non-attendance. The early conditions of the race were: A sweepstakes of 5*l.* each, with 50*l.* added from the club funds. Open to all England. Weights: four-year old, 11 st.; five-year old, 11 st. 9 lb.; six and aged, 12 st. Mares allowed 2 lb. Distance, four miles across a country. The owner of the second horse to receive 10*l.* To be ridden by gentlemen or farmers, or members of fox-hunting or racing clubs. Old Will Smith gave a twang of the horn as a signal to start, and the first race fell to Mr. Hargreave's mare, ridden by Mr. L. Holmes. Flying Billy, who was hopelessly beaten subsequently by Touchstone for the Doncaster Cup, also ran in this race, but came to grief at the last fence but one. Cannon Ball won the next year, having jumped a sheepfold in a corner as his last fence but one. Captain Becher rode in the race, but was forced to leave the convivial party at an early hour, in order to ride Vivian at Egham the next day.

After the lapse of three years the regular Hunt Meeting was established, and a younger generation strove to emulate the deeds

of their forefathers; but the riding of the Richardsons, Nelsons, Walkers, and Marrises, and of George Davy, N. Macvicar and Harry Brooks will bear comparison with that of their predecessors.

The names of Tom Brooks and Field Nicholson are almost household words in North Lincolnshire, and as horsemen they had few equals and no superiors in their day. Mr. Nicholson on Magic beat Dick Christian on King of the Valley, and five others, in the great steeplechase from Nosely Wood to Billesdon Coplow, the celebrated Clinker being one of the field. He and Mr. Brooks used to stop at the George Hotel, Melton Mowbray, when on their hunting expeditions in Leicestershire.

Another equally well-known name is that of Captain 'Jack' Skipworth. Although born so long ago as 1811, it is but a year or two since the writer saw him out with Lord Yarborough's hounds, the tall figure in the long-lapped scarlet coat as erect in the saddle as ever, and the raven locks straggling, as of yore, from under the broad-brimmed tall hat. He was a great sportsman. And what a life of adventure and sport had been his! Two campaigns in Spain, and more than fifty hand-to-hand combats; a duel fought for the honour of his regiment; and for sixty years he was in the first flight with the Brocklesby and many other packs, besides being the winner of steeplechases innumerable; he was also a breeder and a rare judge of horses and sporting dogs, and withal a crack shot. As a rider to hounds and between the flags he had no superior, and some of the best races of the day fell to his skill—the Great Spalding Steeplechase, which he won on Mr. Davy's Gay Lord, being one of his hardest.

Mr. George Pelham, of Barnoldby, was another celebrity at the beginning of the century, and kept a pack of harriers from 1829 to 1835; and Mr. W. G. Loft was also a very great man both over natural fences and between the flags. He it was who won that most sporting of Grand Nationals, as the owner, breeder, trainer and rider of Cure All in 1845.

Mr. W. Marris, owner for many years of the grey Peter Simple, was a good man to hounds, as were the Revs. G. Appleby and Allington, Colonel Tufnell, and Messrs. C. Appleby, Philip Skipworth, Sam Robson and J. Thistlewood.

Mr. Charles Manby Nainby was one of the most dashing horsemen of his day, and the best of sportsmen; and many a tale of horse and hound can he tell yet. Though his years are fourscore and two, and he is unable to follow the sport he loves, he is as keen to hear of our doings as ever. The best run Mr.

Nainby remembers was a very fast one in old Will Smith's time, from Weelsby to a kill at East Holton; a twelve-mile point. In 1854 they found at Mr. Dixon's covert at Holton Park, and after a ring round Nettleton and South Kelsey to the Ancholme, went away over West and Middle Rasen and Linwood, killing their fox in the open on Mr. Seagrave's farm at Lissington. On another occasion (in '56) they ran from the home coverts at Riby, through Hungerhills, and over Healing to Great Coates old covert; thence by way of Bradley Hollow, Tennyson's Holt, and to the left of Bradley Wood to Waltham, and ran their fox up a tree at Holton-le-Clay station.

The late Sir John Astley and Mr. Corbett were prominent men in the Hunt, but Sir John's affections were centred more on silk than scarlet; one of his daughters is generally in the select few of the first flight with the Brocklesby to-day.

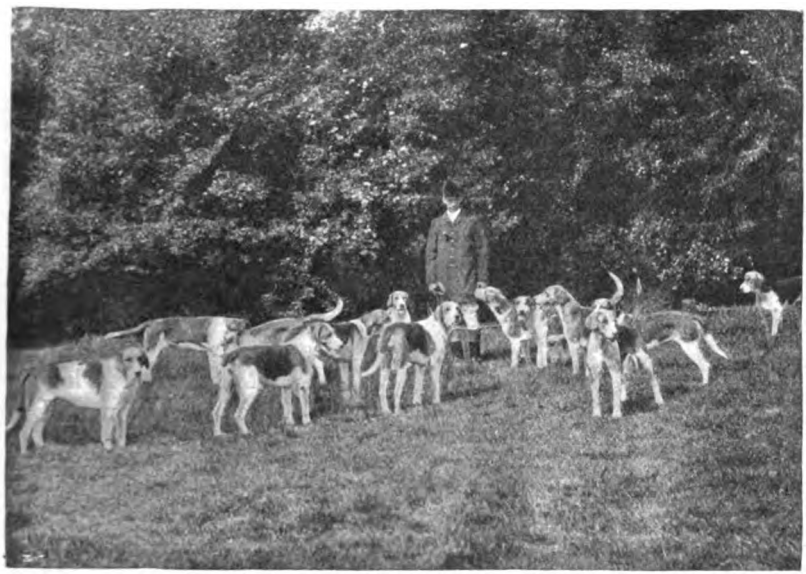
Messrs. G. Skipworth, J. King, G. Tover, and T. Harneise used to be very hard to beat when hounds ran straight with a burning scent.

Mr. W. Philipson, of Bradley, is said to have entertained more fox-hunters than any other man in England, and a more hospitable or kind-hearted gentleman never lived. Everyone passing near his house, either going to or coming from hunting, is expected to give Mr. Philipson a call. Rumour has it that once when hounds were to meet in the neighbourhood it proved to be too frost-bound to hunt, so a party adjourned to Mr. Philipson's, and announced their intention of stopping till hunting was possible—a week if necessary. Some of them did stop nearly a week, and that night (or the next morning, rather) the party went to bed in their boots and spurs, presumably to be in readiness in case the frost broke up suddenly.

A good story is told of a friend of his, one of whose eyes had been closed for some years by a nervous affection. Mr. Philipson swore by old port, which, if taken in sufficient quantity, he was sure would cure it; and at a dinner-party at Bradley, when each had discussed his second bottle of '34, and got the third well under weigh, the offending member slowly opened, to the astonishment of the assembled guests; and the owner thereof had no further trouble with it.

In more recent years Messrs. W. Casswell, W. Richardson, G. Nelson, and G. Marris were bad to beat, and the names of Messrs. Robert and George Walker, though better known for their witching horsemanship over regulation fences, must not be omitted. But the bright particular star of the last half-century

is Mr. J. Maunsell Richardson, who, as an all-round sportsman, has, I should say, no equal. He was in the Harrow eleven of 1864 and 1865, and took the school cup for the best fielder. He won the challenge racquet, the long jump and the hurdles, and Messrs. Angelo's prize for fencing; and rumour has it that the mare Vienna, which, ridden by Mr. G. Nelson, won a 100*l.* steeplechase, was the property of the Harrow boy. Mr. Richardson was in the Cambridge University eleven for 1866–67 and '68, on one occasion he made 138 for the Jockeys *v.* Press, and on another 134 for the Quidnuncs at Ballingdon. He was master of



JIM SMITH

ABIGAIL WELLADAY ROSY AMETHYST ADELAIDE SPINSTER HOPEFUL

the 'Varsity drag hounds, and won the challenge whip on his mare Rival. It was in 1865 that he first donned silk, at Huntingdon, and in spite of a broken stirrup leather at the first fence, won his race easily.

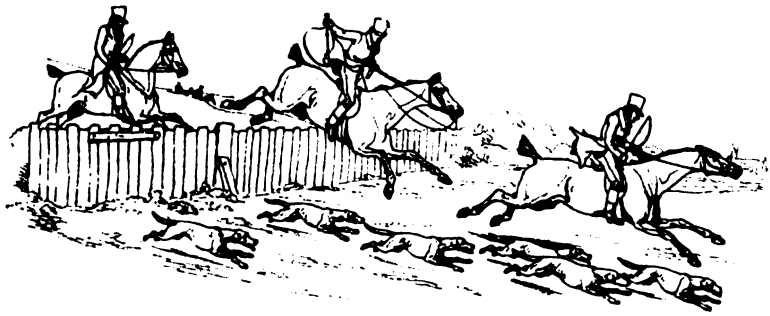
Mr. Richardson's doings would fill a volume, and space will only admit mention of a few of his triumphs. He won the Grand National in 1873 and 1874 on Disturbance and Reugny, and the Croydon United Kingdom with the first named and Mr. Baltazzi's Furley, the latter a splendid race. With Furley and Mr. Chaplin's Schiedam he won the Leamington Grand Annual, and the Grand National Hunt Steeplechase with Schiedam. On Lord Lonsdale's

Bickerstaffe at the Epsom Summer he won the Welter Plate from a field of seventeen; and the following year at Liverpool, on Lincoln, he beat Tom Cannon on Pharaide, after a fine race, by a neck. At Shrewsbury in 1871 he rode a spendid race on Sylla, beating Johnny Osborne on Infidel by a neck, with J. Adams close up on Vagabond.

During the minority of the present Earl of Yarborough the management of the Brocklesby devolved on Victoria, Lady Yarborough and Mr. Richardson, and he showed the best of sport, killing plenty of foxes, and at the same time keeping up the reputation of the old pack on the flags. Lady Yarborough, the widow of the third Earl, who was married to Mr. Richardson in 1881, was one of the best riders of the day, and possesses knowledge of the scientific side of fox-hunting that is probably equalled by no other lady.

Messrs. E. Dowson, F. E. Epworth and W. Wright were an almost inseparable trio; they were the wits of the Hunt, the keenest of the keen to hounds, and their practical jokes and the anecdotes told of them would fill a book. Mr. Dowson was captain of the Surrey eleven in the days of Caffyn, Lockyer and Julius Cæsar, and a great cricketer himself; Mr. Wright once rode his horse over one of the lock gates in the Grimsby Docks, on the occasion of their killing a fox there; Mr. Epworth knows everyone, and has an amusing tale to tell about everyone. But time flows on; one is not, and the other two are fast approaching their three-score years and ten. The names of Messrs. G. E. Davy, N. Macvicar, and H. Brooks (son of old Mr. Tom Brooks, of Croxby) are connected with quite recent years; they were equally good on a natural country or between the flags. Mr. Davy's Sultan, with which he won so many races, was the Home Rule on which Mr. Cyril Flower won, and was disqualified for, the first House of Commons Point to Point. Mr. Harry Brooks once rode the winner of every race at the Brocklesby Hunt Meeting.

A word in conclusion about our present Master. Popular as the Lords of Yarborough have been in the past, they cannot have been more so than is the present Earl. Courteous in the extreme, he rules his field with a gracefulness and tact that is far more effective than the vituperation that some Masters think indispensable to their office. As the old Lord said of Mr. Meynell, so it might be said of our present Master: 'His manners are so essentially those of a gentleman, that no man would wilfully or willingly offend him.'



JUMPING HORSES AND JUMPING COURSES

BY F. J. RIDGWAY

It would seem to be as difficult to draw a trustworthy comparison between the form of our present-day jumping horses and that of the 'chasers and hurdle-racers of, say, fifty years ago, as it is to try to get a line between the talented exponents of cricket as now played and the top-hatted heroes of the past; and I think for exactly the same reasons—namely, altered conditions and more artificial—and, as one hopes, improved—surroundings. The billiard-table pitch and the trimly built up fence, with its trellis-work wings, compare curiously with the rough and ready twenty-two yards on the village green and the old-fashioned unevenly growing obstacle. No; it is quite out of the question to get the Lamb and Cloister together, or to reduce the lion of Gloucestershire, that hardiest of all hardy annuals, W. G. Grace, and Ranjitsinhji, the star of the East, to convincing factors in a rule-of-three sum. Quite apart from the altered character of the jumps, the state of the going is so different that comparisons of 'times'—always somewhat untrustworthy under the most favourable conditions—would not only be 'odious,' but, what is still more important, highly misleading. 'The plough' at Liverpool, for instance, has long disappeared. Every hunting man knows how necessary it is to take a steady at a horse in this sort of going, and a steady of any sort is incompatible with the times made over this course by Old Joe and Cloister. What, again, would the up-to-date trainer and jockey who are accustomed to only well drained courses have thought of the old Croydon steeplechase track about five furlongs from home, where, after comparatively little wet weather, the going became so deep that

the only wonder was that horses on the small side—such as the lion-hearted little Baccy—were not occasionally lost for ever? It was an extraordinary sight to see this little fellow—he was only a pony, and a ragged-looking customer at that—racing alongside the gigantic St. Galmier and that commanding horse The Sinner. He must have been putting in at least three strides to his opponents' one, but he managed somehow to live with them till about half a mile from home, when, full steam being turned on, the pocket hero had to retire defeated but far from disgraced. He subsequently got the National course, with the greatest credit to himself and his pilot, for how tremendous those fences must have appeared from his diminutive back! Notwithstanding the quagmire, however, and the fact that the 'running horses' certainly came badly at one fence—the farmhouse jump, where much grief consequently ensued—the best of good sport was shown on the Woodside pastures, and many gallant horses and gallant men fought out and settled their little differences through the mud and slush where King Golf now exercises his jealous and despotic sway.

Kingsbury was another very sporting course situated almost within the sound of Bow Bells. Here all the fences were natural ones, growers of the highest order, and here, too, good-class 'chasers and hurdle-racers were often in the programme; but the course was too narrow for the big fields of horses that often presented themselves at the post, and frequently, therefore, the competitors had to be started in two divisions. There was no drawing for places at this somewhat rough and ready enclosure; the wheat was sifted from the chaff in a much more primitive way. The starter had only to say, 'Now, you jockeys without spurs, drop behind,' and the riders who were not over-anxious would contentedly fall to the rear. The delicate sarcasm conveyed in these instructions is refreshing and instructive in these more matter-of-fact days.

The Kingsbury course lay under the shadow of Harrow's historic hill, and many sport-loving Harrovians used to 'cut two o'clock bill' and attend the races. There was a legend in the school that a scholar on one occasion exchanged his swallow-tailed coat and straw hat for a silk jacket and cap and rode a winner here, his triumph culminating in a painful interview with the 'head' in the fourth form room. Whether this was true or not, there is no getting away from the fact that the student in question subsequently became one of our most celebrated cross-country riders. Few who were present will forget

HORSE THAT CAN BOTH JUMP AND GET AWAY QUICKLY

the scene that was witnessed on the occasion of the last day's racing on this classic ground. There were no police present; the delicate art of the racecourse thief was apparently too tiring for its usual exponents, and they simply held their victims up as if they were 'practising' in the wilds of the bush. The surrounding householders, to whose action the closing of the course was due, must also have discovered a few bitter dregs at the bottom of their cup of triumph.

Golf has asserted itself, too, on what was formerly the Streatham racecourse, and Colonel Bogey provokes winged words where the doughty Austerlitz erstwhile performed.

Many people will be surprised to hear that not so very long ago steeplechase meetings were held at Blackheath, a distinct and unique feature of this reunion being an event confined to volunteers; the conditions, however, must have been somewhat elastic or as easily evaded as an Act of Parliament, for on one occasion the winner—a well-known professional jockey who had no sort of connexion with Her Majesty's forces—having been objected to for the above reason, pleaded and pleaded successfully that he had for some years held a commission in the Haymarket Volunteers. The prize, in addition to a small money stake, was a handsome silver cup, and during the somewhat heated discussion arising out of the objection this was annexed by one of the habitual followers of the 'sport of kings.' The matter having been settled in favour of the *pseudo* warrior, this serious loss was discovered; immediately the Stewards announced that no more racing would take place that day unless the piece of plate was at once returned. Tremendous pressure must have been brought to bear upon the temporary holder by his friends and associates, for without further trouble the *objet d'art* most mysteriously re-appeared, and all went on again merry as a marriage bell.

Only the most inveterate be-praisers of the past will deny that improvements have been effected in the management of our jumping meetings, however strong may be the exception they may take to the new style of obstacles and the type of horse that gets over them. They decry the latter-day 'chaser on the ground that he is merely a narrow flat-sided, jumped-up animal who has only been put to the game as a last resource owing to his having turned out a miserable failure on the flat, and compare him most unfavourably, as far as looks are concerned, with the winners of their own salad days. The youth of to-day, on the other hand, who can only judge of the appearance of these phenomena from pictures proudly produced by 'Senex,' contemptuously declares

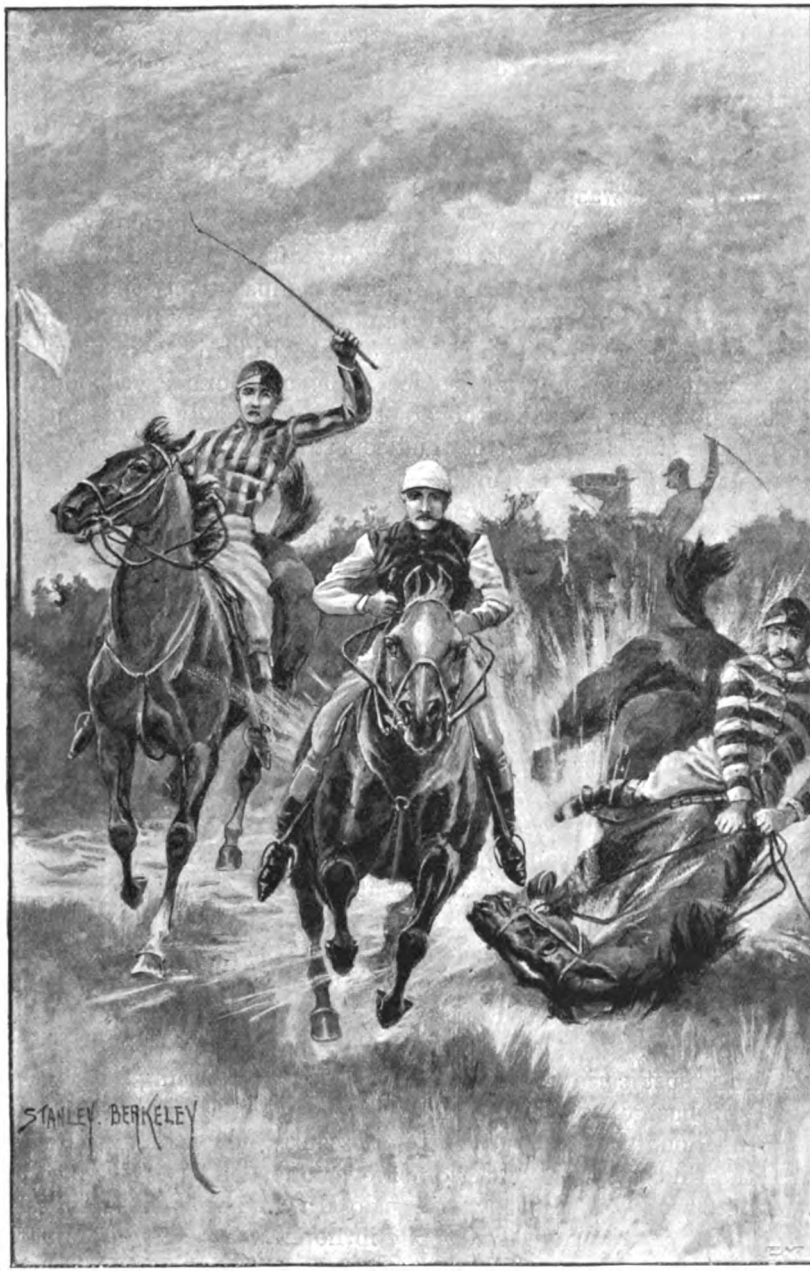
that the old-time smasher looks lonely without a plough; quite forgetting that the certainly somewhat wooden appearance that he presents on paper may be in as great a measure owing to want of capacity in the artist as to want of good looks in the noble animal himself. Discussions of this sort, however convincing the arguments on both sides may appear, can serve no good purpose, for reasons already given. They are apt to sever friendships, and are therefore to be condemned. It simply remains for us to accept the situation as it stands and to be therewith content, the measure of our contentment being regulated to a greater extent than one would probably care to admit by our age and state of bodily health. That there are good horses running now as then is a sure thing, and a convincing proof of this is that it is almost impossible to win even a small event with a really bad jumper, however slow his opponents may be. No doubt many of our latter-day horses are not very speedy. Still, a horse that loses two or three lengths at every fence has a very remote chance of winning 'chases; indeed, one is proud to assert that it is quite out of the question that he should prove victorious unless all the other competitors succumb to some accident. But, on the other hand, the horse that can both jump and get away quickly—two very different accomplishments, by the way—even if he is fairly bowed down with the slows, is sure to win a race sooner or later, though the long wait that is quite likely to take place before the desirable object is attained may turn out a very expensive affair for his patient owner.

The trainer of flat-race horses may often have been entertaining unawares a stayer of the first water, but failed to discover his latent talents simply because the animal's make and shape were opposed to his lifelong ideas of what a stayer should look like; and many cross-country trainers prepare horses to run over hurdles time after time without success, merely because they have not the necessary speed for this class of contest, or because they jump too big, taking too much out of themselves at the 'sticks.' They never dream of trying how these animals would shape over fences, because their conformation is such that they are supposed not to look like 'getting' a country. To such I would say, 'Remember Magpie,' probably the narrowest horse that ever ran on the English Turf, and yet he was one of the safest jumpers that ever looked through a bridle and a stayer of the first water. Owick, too, should afford such as these another object lesson, for though own brother to that very useful hurdler Cestus, he himself was a terrible failure at the same business. It is very

doubtful if he would have won a selling race over hurdles, and yet he developed into quite a good-class horse over a country, though probably not endowed with more than his fair share of stamina, solely owing to his jumping capabilities, which, however, might never have been discovered in less painstaking hands. Again, if the trainer encounters what appear to be almost insuperable difficulties in schooling the recruit from the flat, as distinguished from the natural jumper, of which latter somewhat rare class Too Good was so notable an instance, let him take heart of grace and think of Congress, who for a long time would not even try to jump, and for a still longer period remained a most scratchy and uncertain performer, but yet ultimately turned out a really good steeplechase horse.

Banks are, perhaps, the very best form of obstacle that exists for teaching horses to fence, as they make them 'get up' and jump from their hocks and not off their fore-legs, which is fatal; and though to the lay mind it might appear that this form of jumping would be likely to slow horses for ordinary 'flies' and hurdles, it is the opinion of Charles Gregor—a most successful West-country trainer of horses for all classes of jumping races, and himself one of the finest riders over banks that Devonshire has ever seen—that jumping banks actually sharpens up a horse for any other class of 'lepping' race. This being so, and the monotony of our present system of up-country racing being one of the most common indictments preferred against the sport, it seems a thousand pities that it is impossible to add a few banking races to the card at our 'chasing meetings, for they always afford attractive and truly sporting items in many of the West-country and over the Border programmes.

With regard to trainers, it appears somewhat extraordinary and inconsistent that the racing public, though cordially extending their sympathy to the trainer of flat-race horses, on account of the terrible anxiety that must be his portion, entirely ignore the endless worries which disturb the life of the trainer of jumpers. Of course the stakes at issue are, as a rule, trivial and insignificant in the latter's case as compared with the prizes under Jockey Club Rules; but, on the other hand, the favourite for the good race is presumably sound, whereas the flat-race horse seldom filters down to the smaller cross-country trainer until he has developed some tremendous 'if.' He very probably has a goodly portion of a jeweller's stock-in-trade in his throat, in the shape of a silver tube, literally the hall mark of the noisy one. His hocks as often as not present such an extraordinary appearance,



TWO'S COMPANY, THREE'S NONE

that they really deserve to be photographed for the benefit of a future generation; but, worse even than this, he is very frequently the possessor of a bowed tendon—that danger signal that is so seldom exhibited without something happening.

In this connexion, however, it is possible to hold out a crumb of comfort to the preparer of the unsound, for this season a race was won by a horse who had been fired, and very deeply fired too, only four months before his victory. He was put into gentle work the very day after the operation was performed, and was successful within a comparatively short time, instead of being thrown up and condemned to masterly inactivity, in accordance with old-fashioned ideas. But in the somewhat rare event of the jumping novice being as sound as a bell, the trainer not infrequently discovers that he has only been sent to him because he is a rogue of the deepest dye; and hapless indeed is then his plight. He may get the brute as fit as hands can make him, and yet when he takes part in a race, after looking all over a winner until about two fences, or two flights of hurdles, from home, this heart-breaking animal will rapidly retire from the contest as quite uninteresting to him personally. The trainer is immediately condemned on all hands as an idiot who is afraid to gallop his charges, and as entirely ignorant of his business, even if still more unkind things are not said about him. Little sympathy, too, is extended to the cross-country rider in the privations he has to undergo with a view to keeping his weight down, though many wax quite pathetic when discussing the hardships the flat-race rider experiences with the same object. People imagine because the weights are framed on so much higher a scale in jumping races that no trouble is needed by the jockey in getting down to them, quite ignoring the fact that the 'chasing rider is built on bigger lines, as a rule, than his sprinting brother, and has also in many cases arrived at a time of life when getting off weight is a much more arduous task than it is to a younger man.

The most serious feature of the present jumping season, so far as it has gone, would seem to be the absence of good young horses, though Balmy and Panther, even if the latter's breeding does not indicate the possession of overmuch stamina, promise to be useful recruits over a country, as do Up Guards—whose appearance, however, hardly justifies one in hoping that he will emulate the great performances of his elder brother, Count Schomberg—Sam, and a few more over hurdles. Runnelstone, too, would seem to be a horse 'contrived a double debt to pay' with success;

among selling platers Romeo is certainly an exceptionally good-looking animal, and Carrington's appearance will always render him conspicuous among this class of horse; Cloghran's make and shape, again, would attract attention among the selling hurdlers, and what a patriot this horse must be if the report be true that when dosed with Scotch whisky at Kempton he quite refused to show his best form, but came out in his true colours at Sandown shortly afterwards, the wine of his own country having been previously administered to him in place of the dew from Ben Nevis! A horse with so delicate a palate and so lively a sense of patriotism should be worthy of better things than this. But, while admitting that there is so far an almost alarming dearth of good young horses figuring in this branch of sport, one can hope that many useful young ones are being held in reserve, though owing to our somewhat variable climate this is often a risky policy to pursue, and it is most annoying for both owner and trainer when a horse is got fit, say about the middle of January, to have all their well-laid plans interfered with by an obstinate spell of frost, during which the subject of so much care and attention goes right back again. The absence of young horses may also be in some measure accounted for by the exceptional circumstances that at the back end of last year militated against the preparation of all jumping horses, and especially of young animals that required schooling; for early in the season the going was so hard as to render their education too risky a matter to be lightly undertaken, and then when the ground became soft and trainers were preparing to get on with their charges, coughing broke out in many stables, and again prevented progress.

The new blood from Australia has hardly turned out the successful stop-gap that many anticipated. Norton and Ebor can hardly be placed above the 'useful' class, and Daimio, of whom so much was expected owing to his great reputation 'down under,' must be pronounced a great disappointment. It appears probable that he is really a horse with only one pace, and that he earned his proud position in the land of his birth solely by his wonderful jumping powers—the fences in Australia being much more formidable than our own—and by his great weight-carrying capabilities. But if our serried ranks are not likely to be strengthened by foreign importations, there is a reverse side to the picture, and a raid on the French coast is often very profitable. Detonator has recently won some 600*l.* in stakes in France, an amount which on his home form it would have taken him some time to have accumulated on this side of the Channel.

If the number of youngsters of promise is limited, however, there are plenty of the aged to keep the sport going while the recruits are being put through their facings; and how wonderfully some of these ancient warriors do hang on! Ben Bolt, Eight Bells, and Von der Tann, once Fordham's Derby mount, for instance, were so long public characters that one almost imagined at last that their acquaintance had originally been made in some other sphere. How thoroughly these long-service heroes earned the repose their admirers must hope they are now enjoying! Champion, in a different class, is another respected old-timer, and, though now as white as the top of Mont Blanc, it was a treat last year to see him striding along at exercise on Epsom Downs as if he meant winning a good nursery at no distant date if the handicapper was not too hard on him.

As to our present-day riders, it is just as difficult to compare them satisfactorily with their predecessors as it is to get a line between their respective mounts; but even at the risk of appearing invidious, one may safely assert that A. Nightingall, H. Escott, Mr. Saunders Davies, Captain Bewicke, and Mr. Atkinson would not have disgraced the era famous for the deeds of R. I'Anson, J. Adams, Mr. G. Moore, Mr. A. Yates, and Mr. J. M. Richardson. 'Chasing is a noble pastime, which has made many a man brave and self-reliant, and what higher object can a sport have than this? It only remains to express a hope that a good season, free from accidents and trivial objections, may find a fitting termination in a really exciting Grand National and a successful series of hunt meetings—the very backbone of cross-country sport.

NOTES

BY 'RAPIER'

DOES Dieudonné 'make a noise' is a question which is agitating men who want to make up their minds about the Derby. That those connected with him should deny that he does is in accordance with custom; but my own impression is that, even if he be sound in his wind, he will show himself to be a non-stayer. 'So was Curzon,' I read somewhere the other day, 'and yet he was only just barely beaten for the Derby.' That is true, but it is quite valueless as an argument, because Dieudonné will have some animals of very different character from Sir Visto to beat. I do not want to depreciate Lord Rosebery's horse now that he is at the stud, but his owner will doubtless most readily admit that he was very far removed from a good one. I am very curious to know how Brio may turn out, for a well-grown, good-looking son of Galopin and the speedy Briar-root assuredly ought to do big things. There is a most formidable 'if'—a series of formidable 'ifs,' indeed—in all matters connected with racing. My impression is that Disraeli will win the Derby, because he ran so well last year in the Middle Park Plate under serious disadvantages—a cough, a recent stoppage in his work, and an eccentric race, he and Orzil having, as the phrase goes (and an ugly phrase, too), cut their own throats. They galloped a long way in front of their field at a terrific pace, which practically rendered success impossible, especially in view of Disraeli's backwardness in condition. But here comes the 'ifs'—if all goes well with him, and if he can stay. Perhaps he cannot; nobody knows. The Kingsclere stable is always dangerous, but I do not entertain a very high opinion of either Hawfinch or Batt, for reasons that I will go into later on, when one can ascertain how horses have wintered and things are progressing.

In continuation of my little controversy with 'Ouida,' I am delighted to give the following 'Notes,' which she has been kind enough to send me. Unfortunately, her communication arrived just too late to be published last month. The distinguished novelist writes: 'I have always heard that Lord Granby is as kind and moderate in his pursuit of sport as it is possible to be, and I have read with interest his courteous communication to you. I am greatly pleased to have his support (if only partial) in advocating the protection of bird-life, besides that of game-birds, in English parks, and his admirable censure of the brutal pole-trap. But the keepers will fight against it tooth and nail, and I fear that most of them will rebel, as did the head keeper of a friend of mine. This worthy had received the strictest orders to protect all wild birds; but his employer was away from his estates many months of the year, and the man shot every wild bird he could see, and *buried it immediately*—no doubt in the full belief that he was much wiser than his master.

'Lord Granby thinks that I exaggerate the quantity of game shot in Great Britain, but he does not prove this; and, surely, besides such records as those of the recent princely visit to Lambton, when all the poulterers of Newcastle exhibited thousands of pheasants, of which many hundreds were labelled "Shot by the Prince of Wales," exaggeration would be difficult in this matter, for Lambton is typical and not exceptional. Again, he denies that "tame hand-fed pheasants" are shot, because he says that these tame birds fly high and wildly. No doubt they do: the pheasant is the shyest and most nervous of birds. Naturalists say the silliest; and when the poor creature, who has been used to be fed at the hands of men and was reared under a coop, finds himself in the midst of all that din and danger, the rattle of beaters' sticks and the crack of shots, he is of course terrified, and his instinct carries him as high as he can go over the heads of his tormentors. But this does not prove that he is not *de facto* as much a hand-fed bird as if he were a farmyard pullet. Tens of thousands of these birds are bred as a matter of commerce, and turned down in the coverts a few months or weeks before the shooting begins. They are not the less practically tame birds because, when frightened and startled, their original wild instincts of flight assert themselves. As regards the term battue-shooting, it is rarely used in England, but I submit that it is the correct term for all shooting where

the game is put up to the guns by beaters, whether that game be fur or feather. The term cover-shooting does not necessarily mean the use of beaters, though it has come to be generally accepted in that sense.

'In Scotland the deer are run (instead of being fairly and laboriously stalked), frequently driven, into some glen or to some point convenient to the sportsmen, who despatches them without fatigue. This is called driving, but it is battue-shooting, only the Briton does not relish that name; he prefers to ignore the means by which he reaches his end. Probably not nine-tenths of the *richards* who purchase deer forests would be in form fit enough for deer-stalking, the most trying and formidable of sports. Lord Granby considers that a big shoot is "an excellent performance, either to assist in or to look on at;" so do many millions of people think of a bull-fight. It is a matter of opinion. Personally, I do not believe that any form of carnage can be good, either to see or to share in, for anyone. The other day, shooting under a cover in England, a young girl, who had shot her first pheasant, insisted, triumphant and rapturous, on being "blooded," *i.e.* having the blood of the shot bird daubed upon her cheek. This manner of celebrating success in sport, although occasionally known in the hunting field, is, I believe, quite new to the cover-side. Yet, if the big shoot is "an admirable performance to assist in or to look on at," can we condemn this young and fervid Diana?

'In case this anecdote may be met with derision or incredulity, I may here say that I pledge my word for its absolute truth. Women are apt to overdo whatever they may take up, and, becoming ferocious, they will certainly overdo ferocity. It is to this enormous increase in the numbers who pursue cover and other shooting in the United Kingdom, and the addition of women and children to the ranks of the devotees of killing, that I think Lord Granby does not attribute importance enough; perhaps the fact may not have come immediately under his observation, and so escapes him. He must, however, know that sport is an entirely different thing to what it was when his grandfather and great-grandfather shot the Belvoir coverts or bagged their partridges at Haddon. Within the last few years it has assumed colossal proportions, and obtained an unnatural growth. Its increase and alteration of character is due, no

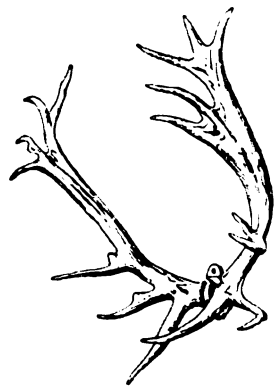
doubt, in part to the invention of the breech-loader, but, in another sense, to princely influence and to the general temper of society in these later days.

'Sport is overdone because everything else is overdone. Sport is display because everything else is display. Sport is trade because everything else turns to trade and tries to ally pleasure to business. The cover-side reflects the tone of the world—the world in which William Massarene is possible and welcome. When no Royal visit is to be had unless there be thousands of heads of game to be shot; when no house party can be got together unless the preserves are well stocked; when shooting absorbs the thoughts, the conversation, and the time of ninety-nine men out of every hundred; when, adored as a pastime, it is also revered as a science and worshipped as a religion, one may be pardoned for suggesting that such unlimited idolatry may have its unworthy and its unwise side.'

With reference to the above I have only a few remarks to make—in all courtesy to 'Ouida.' I fail to see that any reproach can arise to anyone because of the quantity of game shot in Great Britain, always assuming that it is shot in sportsmanlike fashion. In the issue of this magazine the month before I published the Notes Lord Granby so kindly sent me, I had commented on the fact on which he dwelt, that what are called 'tame' birds fly as high and fast as the wildest of their kindred; and that seems to me the only important point! An artist who used to draw for 'Punch' contributed a number of idiotic pictures, all representing the same sort of scene—men with guns lounging in comfortable chairs, servants in livery handing them champagne, and pheasants walking about all around them. I am sorry to find these silly caricatures in the collected volumes of 'Pictures from Punch,' because many persons may suppose that this is only a more or less exaggerated version of the real thing. The good sportsman—and no one defends the bad—wants his birds fast and high, to come to him in such a fashion that their powers of flight give them a fair chance of their lives, and that it requires genuine skill to bring them down. I fancy that deer-driving is far less common than 'Ouida' supposes, for one thing, and, for another thing, that when it is practised the deer are by no manner of means so easily killed as she appears to imagine.

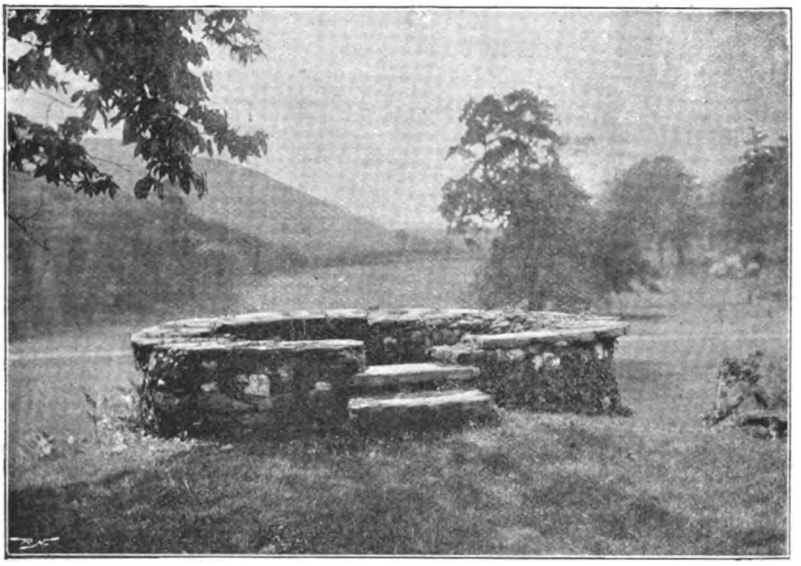
As for the girl who wanted to be 'blooded,' I quite accept 'Ouida's' statement that this very ugly business happened. But it is a most exceptional incident; the young woman must have been a highly objectionable person, and her friends no better. Such an offensive occurrence, however, is no condemnation of true sport, which I take to be the pursuit of game in such a manner that their natural cunning and powers of flight or speed make them a fair match for the pursuer. It is impossible even yet to convince the person who knows nothing of sport that there was not something admirable, if not even noble, in beating the hedgerows and killing a pheasant that blundered up fifteen feet or so from the muzzle of the gun, and that it is not contemptible to knock over a rocketer coming down wind, forty miles an hour, forty yards up in the air. The same person cannot understand that it is infinitely easier to shoot partridges when they are walked up, if they will lie at all, than it is to hit the driven bird. We have all read of the massacre of birds 'driven into the corner of a field,' as if they stayed there to be shot!

An occasional correspondent, who has lately been travelling on the Continent, came across a 'head,' exhibited for sale, of so remarkable a character that, after examining it carefully, and ascertaining that it was genuine and not a plaster of Paris invention, he made an accurate drawing, and took the necessary measurements. He has very kindly sent me this account of his find. The details are very extraordinary, not merely because it is a head of (including knobs) 24 points, but because the weight is nearly 43 lb.! Some of the dimensions are as follows:—Girt of the coronets, 16 inches. Girt of the beam between brows and trays, 9 inches. Length of brow antlers, from tips to centres of coronets, 18 and 20 inches. Out to out span, 41 inches. Distance from tips of crowns to centres of coronets, 41 inches in each horn. Its history is to the effect that the stag was killed in Germany in the sixteenth century, and that the head has been in the possession of the same family ever since, until circumstances made it necessary that its



value should be realised. The price asked was 60*l.*, and here is a reproduction of the sketch. It will, I am sure, be appreciated by those who are interested in or familiar with deer.

Everybody has heard of cock-pits, but few persons have seen one; and it has occurred to me that many may be interested by the accompanying view—kindly sent to me by Mr. R. St. John Corbet, of Shrewsbury—of a famous pit in the grounds of Peniarth Ucha, near Towyn, the property of Mrs. Scott, of Betton Strange, Shropshire. I am not for a moment going to defend the sport, though one might say something for it on the



ground that cocks fight because they like it, because 'it is their nature to.' In old numbers of the 'Sporting Magazine' it is curious to find very often after the record of a race meeting a notification that 'a main of cocks was also fought between the Gentlemen of Hampshire and the Gentlemen of Sussex,' with details of the results. The Romans, it is said, introduced cock-fighting to this country, and it has never been extinct—there is a good deal more of it going on now than most people suppose.

THE

BADMINTON MAGAZINE

March 1898

ON THE TRAIL OF THE SCORCHER

BY LORD MONCREIFF

I FEEL sure that no candid cyclist will assert that at present the scorcher is adequately punished when he is convicted of crime. If he rushes through a crowded thoroughfare after dark at twenty miles an hour without lamp, bell, or brake, he is simply admonished; or a small fine is inflicted, which is cheerfully—that is, insolently—paid. If, unfortunately, he kills someone, he is still better off. He is tried by a jury and acquitted out and out. How is this? Do judge and jury feel that they may be in the dock any day themselves? It may be so; but I would not willingly believe this. Or is it that they, as true Britons, are unwilling to do anything to discourage a popular sport? Whatever may be the reason, public opinion must be educated; and it is to this end that I humbly contribute a few suggestions.

I am not a cyclist; but if a machine is ever invented which will stand still to let you mount, and will permit you to dismount without knocking you down and lying on the top of you, I shall be prepared to entrust my middle-aged bones to it. Respectable cyclists I admire and envy. The scorcher awakens other feelings; hatred and fear I may feel when he shaves me; but the prevailing sentiment with which he inspires me is a wild desire for the chase. I long to hunt him, *and I have done it.*

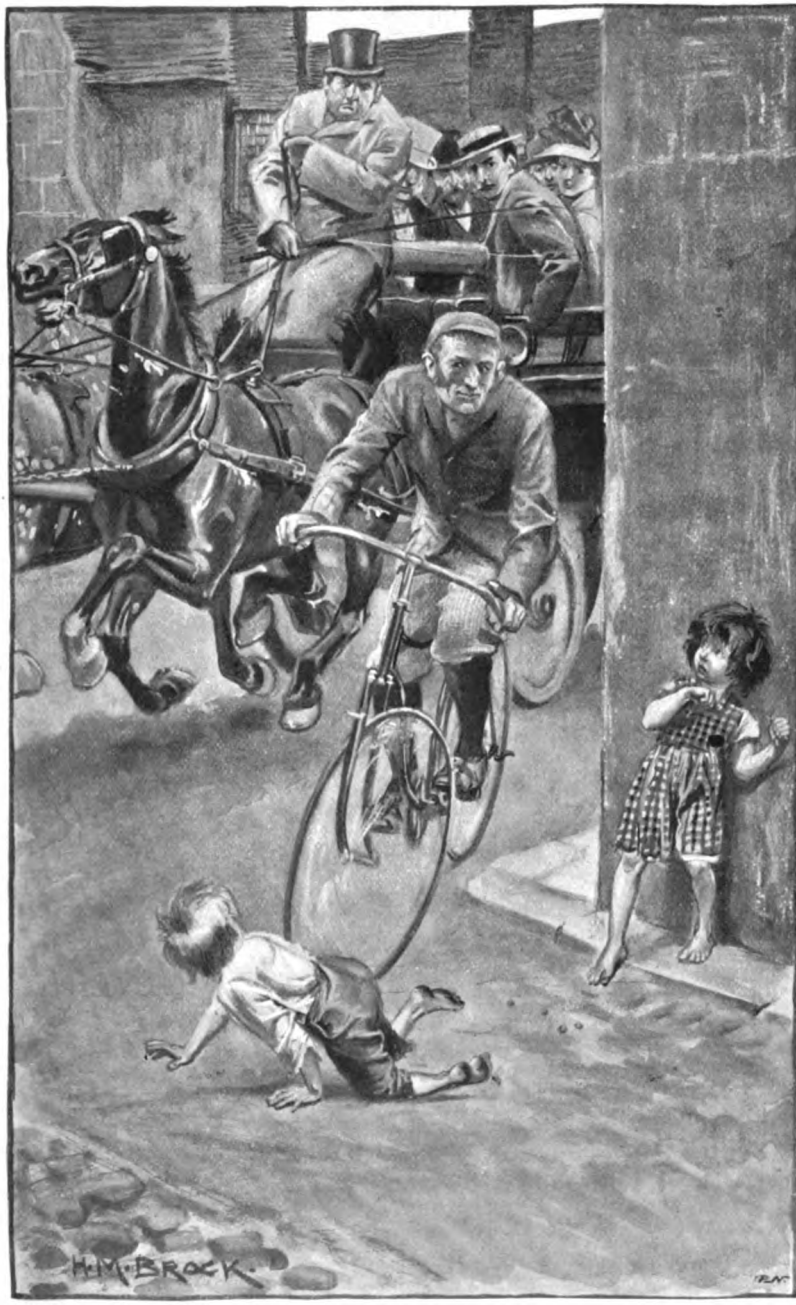
Perhaps I ought not to relate my experiences, but the end justifies the means. If those to whom the administration of justice is entrusted can once be convinced that, fine sport as cycling is, hunting the cyclist is infinitely more exciting they will have no more squeamishness in giving the scorcher his dues. My only fear is that the knowledge may lead to unbridled and unlicensed pursuit of him. This, of course, must be restrained or regulated.

About ten years ago I paid a visit to a friend in the Lowlands of Scotland. Among the sights of the neighbourhood are some magnificent falls, to view which my friend was very fond of taking his guests. It is rather a serious undertaking—twenty-five miles by rail, and a drive of eight miles. This time he would take no denial; the whole party had to go: three ladies—a mother and two daughters—and five men. The men included a Judge, a Sheriff, a member of Parliament (our host), and two Justices of the Peace—all staid middle-aged men, except the junior Justice, who was a lad of thirty-five. He was not a serious man, I fear.

I need not dwell upon the proceedings of the expedition prior to our return drive from the falls to the county town of H——. It was a lovely August evening, and the light was just beginning to fail a little. Our carriage was a hired wagonette and pair; one horse was old and steady, but the near horse was young and restive. On the slightest excuse it shied and plunged; but our driver had wrists of iron, so we had come to pay little or no attention to its eccentricities. The driver had a remarkable face, Napoleonic in its outline, betokening self-control and (bad) temper. He never swore, but he looked murder when those bouncings took place; and oh! how he used his whip!

About two miles from H—— we were coming down an incline at a point where the road runs along a rather precipitous and unfenced embankment. Suddenly, without a sound, there shot past us from behind a coasting cyclist (hereinafter called the scorcher). This was too much for the young horse, which had not had an outburst for quite fifteen minutes. It gave a terrific lurch to the side; but for Napoleon's powerful arms we should have been down the embankment, and there would have been a few vacancies, judicial and otherwise.

After the trap was righted, the first thing that attracted my attention was that our pace was considerably increased, and that the driver was using his whip freely to both horses. I could see his face; it was simply livid with wrath; he was undisguisedly in pursuit of the scorcher. Now, I suppose that, strictly speaking,



THE SCORCHER TURNED ABRUPTLY AT RIGHT ANGLES, AND DARTED INTO A NARROW CLOSE

we should have told him to pull up; but not a voice was raised, and the chase proceeded.

The scorcher was a short, bandy-legged man; he was mounted on a rather low bicycle. He only once looked round, disclosing a foxy face with red side whiskers. That glance was enough. He at once discovered his danger, and, settling down, rode for his life, going at the hills like a lion. We gained on him uphill, but lost going downhill and round corners.

On the whole we gained, and the light of murder glared in our driver's eyes. I confess that I lost all sense of responsibility or compunction; my one desire was that we should overtake the scorcher. I don't think that I gave a thought to what would happen then, or the consequences, and my honest belief is that the whole party were in the same frame of mind.

I must say this for our friend on wheels, he scorched well. Never have I witnessed a more honest, a more brilliant bit of riding than when he sat down to finish a quarter of a mile from home. (*He* knew, although we did not, that he was nearing the rails.) Squat as a toad over his handles, with his little bandy legs going like pistons, he glided in and out among the traffic, now upon the footpath, shooting murderously close past the foot passengers, then back on to the road among the carts returning from market.

We often lost sight of him behind carts and carriages, but just as we entered the suburbs of H—— we found ourselves within fifty yards of him, with a clear road before us. There was a slight incline and we gained gradually. At last, after a supreme effort, we got within striking distance, and Napoleon was just 'rising in his place' to administer the first cut, when, without the slightest warning, the scorcher turned abruptly at right angles, darted into a narrow close, nearly running over two children who were playing in the gutter, and disappeared in the murkiness of the background.

It was grandly done. It was impossible to follow him, and, besides, the horses, plunging worse than ever, and this time with a valid excuse, were scarcely under control.

Now came what I think was the strangest experience of the day. During the chase I had been guiltily conscious that my expressive features betrayed pleasurable excitement and anticipation; and, when our prey was snatched from us, corresponding chagrin and disappointment. For the first time since the chase began I turned round and scanned the faces of my companions. To my surprise they were one and all staring stolidly before them

as if nothing had happened; as if, forsooth, we had not come two miles at racing speed, whisking round corners on two wheels, and generally risking our precious necks. In particular the Judge's face was abnormally stony; his lordship knew, none better, how the law regards an accessory before the fact. The only face which disclosed any human emotion was that of our host, who looked like a reprieved murderer; as well he might, seeing that the scorcher was undoubtedly a constituent, even if he was not, as the junior Justice afterwards suggested, the Provost of the town. The other men took their cue from the Judge, and even the ladies seemed absolutely unconcerned. I took the hint and made no remark; not a soul alluded to the episode.

I harbour no grudge against that scorcher; on the contrary, I shall ever feel grateful to him for the sport he provided. Unless he perished prematurely, blinded by excess of scorching, or ground to powder by some outraged coachman, he must have gone far. We never met again.

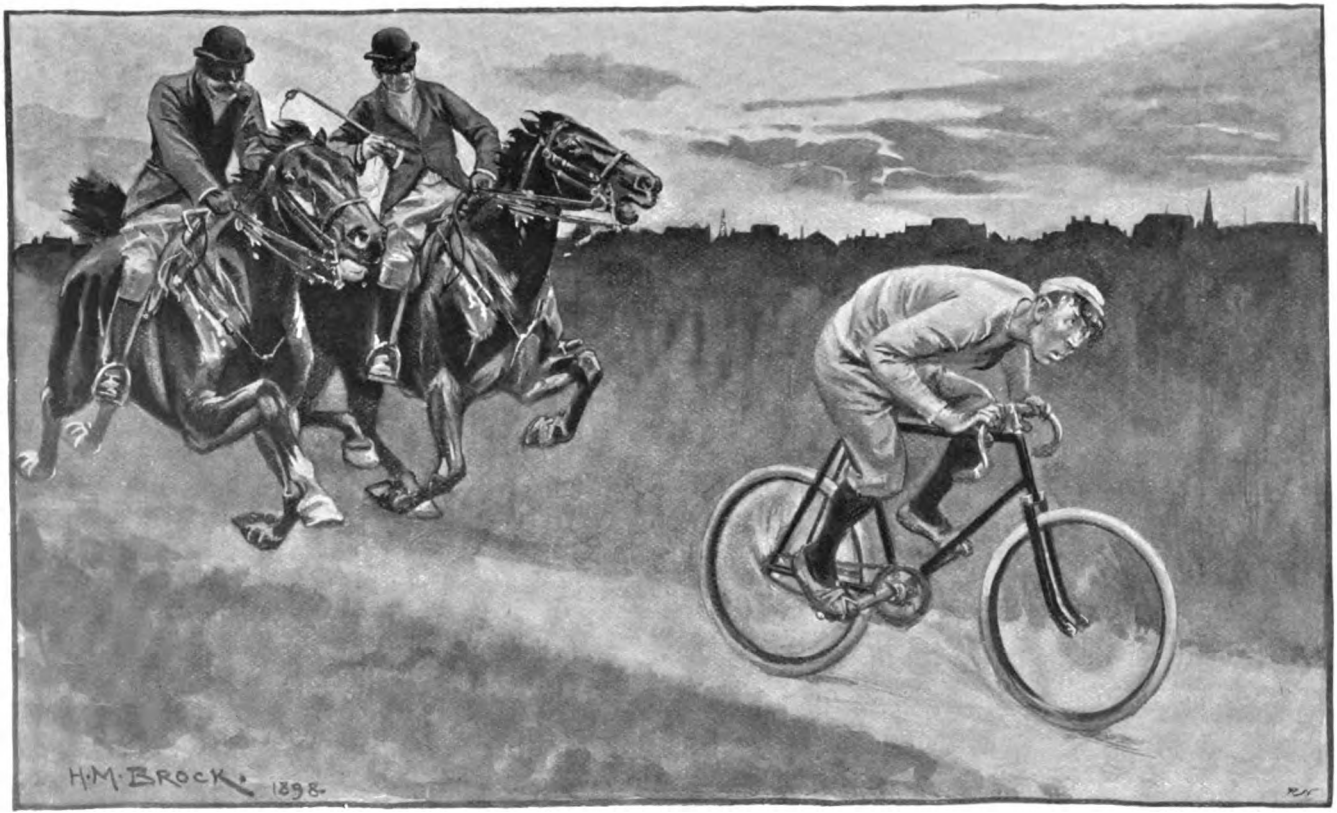
This ten-year-old tale conveys a valuable lesson, and it is this:—

If eight respectable persons, middle-aged on the average, and packed tight as herrings in a badly hung wagonette, could so far forget themselves and their discomfort as to feel keen enjoyment in that unhallowed chase, what would not be the delight of a sportsman, well mounted and armed with a hunting crop or other suitable instrument of flagellation, on being authorised by law to pursue and slay the scorcher?

I do not disguise the fact that I am aiming at the licensed hunting of scorchers. Of course this cannot be attained all at once; but let us make a beginning. Let an experiment be made on the vile body of a convicted scorcher. He is convicted, let us say, of serious injury to the person, fracture of bones, &c. The judge's duties will be simple. The statutory sentence will run, 'I sentence you, A. B., to ride the official course on Tuesday next on your own bicycle.' The scorching brotherhood will soon learn what that involves.

The official course will be two miles in length, circular for choice, with a path in the middle for the convict, and turf on either side for the horses of the official huntsmen. The gradients must be carefully adjusted so as to give fair play to both sides and ensure a close finish.

The official huntsmen (two in number) will be taken in turn from a roster composed of skilful riders to hounds and polo players from crack regiments, the latter preferred. Their aim will be to



THEIR AIM WILL BE TO OVERTAKE THE CONVICT

overtake the convict, administer to him substantial corporal chastisement as he rides, to which his prone body will lend itself, and finally to upset him and his bicycle without causing more serious personal injury than they can help. On the faithful discharge of their delicate duties their tenure of office will depend. If they fail to catch him he gets off scot-free.

Should the public be admitted? I think not. I have considered this. While it is desirable to carry the public with us, I see that to admit them might not only lead to betting and rowdyism, but involve a risk of attempts at rescue; and this from two distinct quarters—those who are habitually in sympathy with crime, and officious persons who may profess to consider the execution degrading and brutalising. If this happened the venture might be wrecked at the outset.

Of course this is the rudest outline; it admits of endless modifications which will have to be adjusted by experts under instructions from the Home Office.

But suppose, some will say, that the victim declines to ride? This will present no difficulty. The sentence will by statute be held to mean and include a provision that if the convict refuses or delays to ride, or, on being overtaken, jumps off his bicycle, the cat well laid on once a month, or twelve strokes with a birch-rod once a week for a twelvemonth, or some such suitable equivalent, will be substituted. Fear not; he will ride.

Well, if this experiment succeeds and the public conscience approves, as no doubt it will, we may proceed to consider the granting of roving licences to trustworthy and qualified persons. This will require careful regulation and stringent provisions against personation and abuse of their privileges by the licensees. But there should be no publication of the list. It would produce wholesome terror if the scorcher saw a possible licensee in every horseman he met.

This sport will tax the licensee's hunting instincts and powers severely. He must choose his ground warily because the scorcher will not be easily caught on a good road, and in the absence of turf the horse will be at a disadvantage. But there are great possibilities in it. Special licences may be granted to pursue the scorching burglar or bicycle thief with a lasso (a pretty variety), or a lance blunted or furnished with a hook at the end. A trained pack of fox-terriers and many other refinements will readily suggest themselves.

While I shall warmly support this proposal if practicable, I must point out that there are serious difficulties to be overcome,

in the interests not only of the scorcher, but also of the licensee, which cannot arise where 'the official course' is run.

From the necessity of the case, the licensee must be a law unto himself to the extent, at least, of deciding when a man is scorching. This is a grave responsibility, and there will be serious risk of the young bloods among the licensees deciding to their own satisfaction that sober cyclists doing their six or eight miles an hour are scorching or about to scorch, and forthwith chevying them to death. If any such regrettable mistake were to occur in the case of a citizen of position, there would be an end to roving licences. How is this to be checked? An official referee cannot always be in attendance; and it will not do to confer on the licensee that immunity from the consequences of inevitable misadventure which will attend the performances of the official huntsman.

Again it is barely possible that the scorcher may turn and defend himself; and this may, and probably will, lead to breach of the peace and possibly shooting at sight.

But this is merely the fringe of a large question, which cannot adequately be treated in this short article. If the suggestions which I have ventured to make lead to public discussion, and the ultimate removal or mitigation of a grave scandal, I shall be more than repaid.

INDIAN PIG-STICKING

BY R. D. RUDOLF

It is early dawn in a Bengal April morning—so early, that the first glow of the rising sun has not yet touched the distant snowy peaks of the Himalayas. The moon is still high in the sky. But we have a long day's work ahead of us, so our servants had instructions last night to wake us at this very early hour, and, sleepy as they may be, they know well that if the sun should rise and we still in bed, he would shine a sad day for them. How easy it is the night before to gaily give the order that one is to be called at 4 A.M., and what a cruel thing that same order appears in its fulfilment! However, we have much to tempt us from our beds to-day, for are we not going to beat the famous Namiarali jungle for pig? and all who know anything of the district are aware that we have here a sure find, and that, at the present moment, many great boar are probably just getting to sleep in their lairs amongst the long grass, after a night of feasting in the villagers' fields of sweet potatoes near by, and of drinking from the river that flows past their retreat.

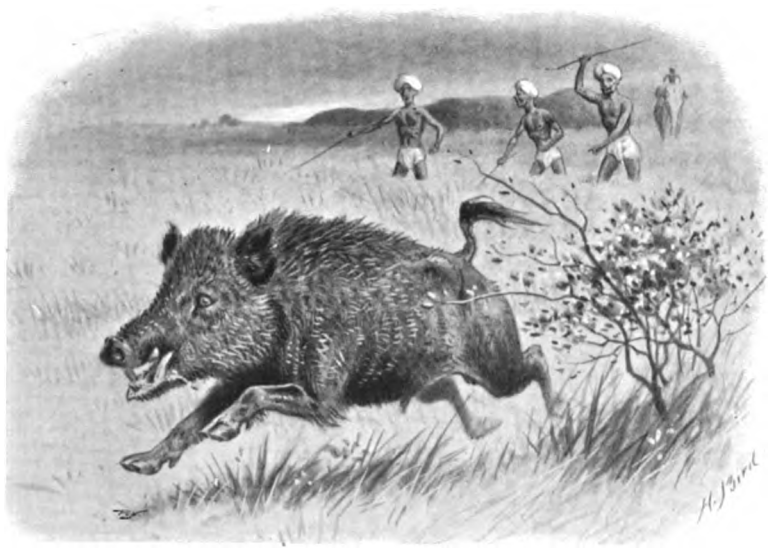
Presently all of us, twelve men in number, are dressed, booted and spurred, and sleepily sitting round a long table in the great verandah, doing our best to get outside of bacon and eggs and other eatables before starting. The jungle is some three miles distant and all our riding horses have already started, each led by his native groom, who carries over his shoulder a bundle of bag-

spears. These are made with steel heads, of myrtle-leaf or diamond shape, mounted on male or solid bamboo shafts about seven feet long, and having, at the butt end, a leaden weight to balance the weapon.

Early breakfast does not take long, and soon we are driving in dog-carts to the scene of the sport. The sun is now just appearing and has no power as yet, and we drive bare-headed, in order thoroughly to enjoy the cool fresh air, scented with the odour of many tropical flowers. The dusty road winds through silent grooves of mango trees and past native villages, where the inhabitants are beginning to turn out sleepily to attend the drive, or to work in the fields, and groups of dusty little urchins stare at us with wide-open eyes, shrieking with delight at the unusual spectacle of so many sahibs.

Arriving at our destination we see, in a large mango wood, all the horses and ponies, and at a little distance a group of twenty-five or thirty elephants, surrounded by hundreds of natives. These men are the beaters, and for the sum of two annas, or less, a day they will tramp through the long grass and brushwood in rows, threshing about with their long bamboo sticks (called '*lahties*'), shouting loudly and beating tom-toms to frighten the pig from their lairs. Few Europeans, bare-footed and almost unarmed, would care to join in this work at any salary, and yet these fellows seem to enjoy it and, as a rule, are not afraid. In nearly every drive some of them are hurt by pig, and, as a rule, it is the timid ones, who keep outside the jungle, that suffer. For a little while we walk about among the trees inspecting the horses and hearing stories of former struggles with pig, in which this or that animal saved his rider from danger, or, by his speed and handiness, gained for him the coveted 'first spear.' Presently our host drives up, genial and smiling, and all mount their horses, except a few who get on the elephants in order to direct the drive. The whole army of elephants, beaters, and horsemen make for the jungle near by. This jungle consists of a large patch of long grass, measuring perhaps a mile in length and half a mile in width and tapering at both ends. The grass is high enough completely to conceal the beaters and, in many places, the elephants, and is thickly studded with thorn-bushes, which, later in the day, play havoc with our clothing and skins. Our host, who is an old hand at the business, mounts a great elephant and takes his position in the centre of the line, into which all the elephants have been formed at one end of the jungle, while the beaters—who number upwards of a thousand men

—are with much noise at last got into line behind the elephants. The riders, each armed with a spear, are formed into two parties, which take up their positions at the sides of the jungle, being careful not to get ahead of the line. The drive then begins. What a noise the beaters make, as they shout, beat tom-toms, and whack the grass with their sticks! Flocks of little birds dart up here and there, startled by the strange sounds, and occasionally a partridge or quail goes whirring away to settle further on. Crash! goes some heavy animal there through the jungle ahead of the line, and the nervous novice, trembling with excitement,



OUT RUSHES A GREY BRISTLY OLD PIG

and eager to distinguish himself, grasps his spear and with bated breath watches the long grass wave, as the hidden fugitive makes his way to the edge of the jungle. He bounds into the open, to show himself, not a pig, but a neilghi, one of the largest known species of dear. He pauses for a moment, terrified by the sight of the horsemen, and then starts away at a long canter for a distant thicket. Ping, goes a rifle from a howdah on one of the elephants, and a spurt of dust just beyond him shows how narrow an escape he had. The horsemen, who are after pig alone, feel glad to see the beautiful creature reach a safe distance; but the natives think differently, as he and his numerous wives and

family play havoc amongst their crops. Presently out sneaks a jackal, but neither spears nor bullets stoop to his level, and a few village dogs speed him to a safe retreat.

More neilghi break away, and our novice is almost despairing of seeing the great boar, of which he perchance dreamt last night, when suddenly, close to him, with a hoarse grunt, out rushes a grey bristly old pig, angry at being disturbed in his morning nap, and grunting vengeance on all who come near him. At a signal the line stops, and Mr. Pig, after having been given a start to get him free of the jungle, is hotly pursed by the party of that side. Away he goes at a lumbering canter, which looks slow until you try to catch him, and then you realise how fast he is really travelling. Straight for a distant jungle he heads, for, brave as he is, a boar generally prefers flight to battle, although he seldom fears the latter when he cannot comfortably escape. He has a clear mile to cover before he reaches the haven, and, ere he has accomplished half the distance, M——, our host's head assistant and right-hand man, is up to him on 'Robin,' his well-tried Arab. Just as he is about to plunge his spear well home, the pig suddenly alters his course, and goes off to the left across the horse as fast as ever. M—— is thus temporarily thrown out, and the second man, turning his horse in time, is on the pig's track. He is more fortunate, for the fugitive growing angrier as his wind gets shorter, suddenly turns in under the horse, meaning to rip him with his powerful tushes as he passes under him; but N——'s spear meets him in the shoulder, and over he rolls with the force of the shock. N—— has thus gained the first spear, and the head of the pig will belong to him when it is captured. But Mr. Pig is very far from consenting to this easy disposal of his cranium, the prod which he has received has only thoroughly aroused him, and, abandoning all thought of flight, he rushes wildly at the nearest horseman, again only to meet with the sharp point of a spear. After two or three such unsuccessful attacks, he stands still and glares at his enemies, the very picture of impotent fury and indomitable courage. Ride near him who may, he is sure to charge, but each time he gets the worst of it; then, with one grunt of anger he rolls over on his side, and is soon despatched. Dismounting, we gather round him and admire his fine tushes, which curl up on each side of his mouth, and with which he would so easily and so willingly have ripped up our horses or ourselves. Some natives come up and pluck the coarse bristles from his back, to be used by them as a medicine. He measures thirty-two inches

OVER HE ROLLS WITH THE FORCE OF THE SHOCK

at the shoulder, and is a fine beginning to the day's bag. N—— makes a notch, or some such mark, in one of the ears, in order that he may recognise his property later on; and, as we ride slowly back to the line of beaters, we can see a cart, drawn by bullocks, going leisurely out to bring in the carcass.

The beat continues, and, as the line nears the far end of the jungle, more and more of the inmates are driven out. There goes a whole herd of neilghi, making for the thin strip of wood along the river bank, and jackals by the dozen, snarling, find a safer refuge. The cry of 'Pig!' again goes up, and the line stops; but he breaks back through them all, and gets a temporary retreat behind the line. The line has now reached the narrow end of the jungle, and the elephants are neared to each other until their sides touch and the line of beaters is several men deep. The grass in front of them is alive with all kinds of birds and beasts, and these fly and break away across the open. There is a crowd of yelping pariahs surrounding a surly bristling old porcupine, and here, just in front of us, a sow, followed by a row of little pigs, makes for the river bank unpursued; for we do not wage war on women and children. The village dogs, however, have no such code of honour, and closely follow the family, until the indignant mother turns on them savagely, and thus covers the retreat of her funny looking offspring. The natives are unwilling to spare these young ones, and fling their sticks at them, until sternly reprimanded by the jemidars (native overseers). One or two more pig break out at the very end of the grass, but, on seeing what is awaiting them, turn and get back round the ends of the line of beaters. And woe betide any beater who, from faint-heartedness or sore feet, remains outside the edge of the grass, and thus gets in the way; for the pig will make straight for him, and, as he passes under, will cut him with his sharp tushes. There is one man down already, and bleeding too. He is carried into the open, and, sure enough, has a nasty gash behind the knee. Luckily we have a doctor in the party, who, knowing what to expect, has not come unprepared. The line of elephants and beaters is now turned round, and slowly works over the same ground again; but the three or four good boar which we know have broken back will not come out, but lie close in their lairs. The elephants warm to their work, beat the grass with their trunks, and push themselves through the thorn-bushes in a determined manner. Then one smells or sees a pig, and, with his trunk thrown up and trumpeting shrilly, rushes forward and tries to trample or kneel on the foe. But it

is all no use, the pig will not break. The beaters and elephants are withdrawn.

Whew! how hot it is! and can it be possible that the sun, which earlier in the day looked so cool and harmless, is now

CUT HIM WITH HIS SHARP TUSHES

burning up everything? But it will very soon be hotter still, for dozens of natives are busy firing the grass; and soon a red line of flame can be seen advancing steadily through the jungle, fanned by the hot west wind, which daily rises about 9 A.M., and filling the air with black specks and smoke, leaving behind it

a blackened and but partially burnt grass; for some of this is too green to burn well.

The pig do not like this form of attack, and presently one breaks away on the far side, and we watch the party yonder pursue him. He takes them over a nasty country, and when the foremost rider is up to him there are only three of the five who started in their saddles, two riderless horses being seen galloping away towards the distant factory, followed by their fleet-footed grooms. Neither rider seems to be hurt, and they are soon mounted again, probably vowing vengeance on the cause of their disaster. The pig is now at bay some two miles away, and soon the party riding back show that he has been added to our bag.

It is now nearly 10 A.M., and the heat is terrible, both from the sun and from the jungle fires. The air is full of smoke, and a thirst such as can only be equalled under similar circumstances takes hold upon us, so that we are right glad when our host dismisses the beaters and elephants, who make helter-skelter for the river, while we head for the comforting shade of a great pepul tree. Under it our clean white-clothed servants have spread a repast of cold viands. They help us to long iced drinks of various kinds ('shandy gaff' being the favourite).

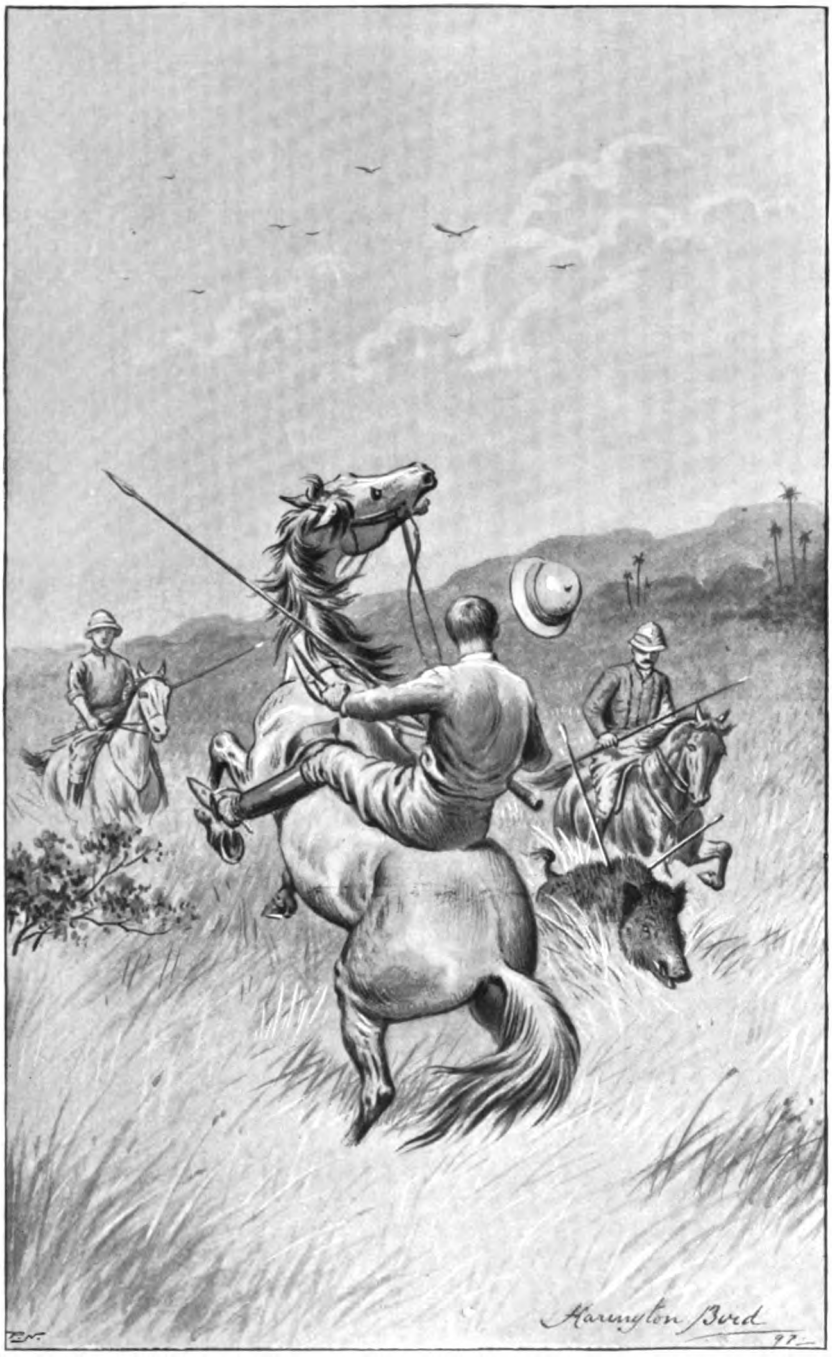
What luxury it is, after the heat and hard work of the morning, to lie in the grateful shade of the grand old tree, and as the clouds of tobacco smoke curl upwards to gaze through them into the leafy depths, and dreamily picture the scene of perhaps a hundred years ago, when a widow was voluntarily burnt upon the funeral pyre of her husband, in the ashes of which this tree was planted to mark the spot! Here have come, year after year, the simple villagers, with their poor offerings of flowers and coins; for the tree is sacred to the memory of those whose tomb it marks, and weird spirits dwell amidst its branches who must be propitiated.

The scene around us is a truly Eastern one. In the centre are the white men in various postures, all trying to get the greatest amount of rest in the shortest time, and looking thoroughly disreputable in large solar topees, flannel shirts, and riding breeches, well begrimed with the smoke of the burning jungle. Can these be our spotlessly clean comrades of last night's dinner? Behind them are the table servants, busy with knives and forks, tumblers, &c. There are our horses, enjoying the shade and rest, and drinking greedily their *suttoo* (Indian meal and water), or sucking at pieces of ice, which they love on

such occasions. Yonder, beside the bullock carts, the drawers of which are lying down peacefully chewing the cud, lie the results of the morning's sport—two boar, looking grim and terrifying even in death. Around all is a brown circle of villagers, staring hard at the sahibs and their strange ways.

To horse once more, and now the old hands mount their best nags, for they know that the pig always break most freely in the heat of the day, and that probably the best sport is yet to come. The fierceness of the jungle fire is dying down, but several distant patches of grass are still in full blaze, and there, sure enough, are two pig, trotting back to the charred remains of their lairs, whilst a third is seen beyond the river, leisurely making across an open country. Our host points him out, with the remark that he is heading for a jungle full five miles away. Three of us ford the river and get on to his track, while the rest of the party follow the two first seen. The river runs shallow over the ford and the water is hot from the sun. The pig soon sees that he is pursued, and quickens his pace, but, after a fine gallop, we are up to him, and in the middle of an indigo field, the green crop in which is only a few inches high, he turns to bay at two or three village dogs who are snapping at his heels. H—— is up to him at once and sticks him in good style, but the pig charging at the same moment the spear comes out, and turning round, goes clean through the shoulder of H——'s horse. This is an accident which not infrequently happens, and may be a source of danger to a rider, and the tiro is always warned against lightly losing hold of his spear, although sometimes this cannot be helped. In this case, fortunately, the wound is only skin deep. The pig is now in grand fighting form, and charges anyone who approaches him. My pony is new at the work, and suddenly shying round at the most critical moment, nearly deposits her rider on the ground in front of the enemy; but sheer urgency makes me strong, and I somehow or other clamber back from the region of her tail into the saddle, longing for my tried horse of the morning, who would not thus have played me false. Two spears have been left sticking in the pig, and as he moves these wag about and make it a very difficult matter to approach him. A lucky spear, delivered in the neck, however, suddenly drops him in his tracks, and he ceases to be a terror to the country around.

Back we hurry across the river, for we see our companions there galloping in parties of two and three in several directions, and know that there is grand fun going on. The river bank is lined with hundreds of natives, most of whom have come simply



NEARLY DEPOSITS HER RIDER ON THE GROUND IN FRONT OF THE ENEMY

to watch the sport, but a few are armed with rough home-made spears, and are waiting there for any pig who may swim the stream. Surely enough there is one doing so now, and as he approaches the opposite bank these rascals wade out to meet him and kill him in the water with no risk to themselves, for he is powerless to hurt them when thus situated. This is poaching of the worst kind, and the pig is taken from them, as are also the spears, by the jemidars. Stern justice will be meted out to the evil-doers at the factory to-morrow, for be it known that an indigo-planter is a very autocrat in the country round his factory, and of all sins perhaps our host will look with least leniency on illicit pig murder.

The sport wears on, some other pieces of jungle are beaten and burnt, and by 5 o'clock our bag has risen to nine boar and one sow. The latter would not have been numbered among the slain but that she wilfully charged our host, and he in self-defence laid her low. Several natives have been cut, but none seriously, and the carefully tended wounded are looked upon with almost envious eyes by their brother beaters, for they will obtain good food and lodging at our host's expense until their wounds are healed, and may also receive backsheesh. This reminds one of the native prisoner who, on the night of his dismissal from gaol, committed a burglary upon that hospitable retreat in order that he might again be shut up where good food and lodging were so easily obtained from a munificent government.

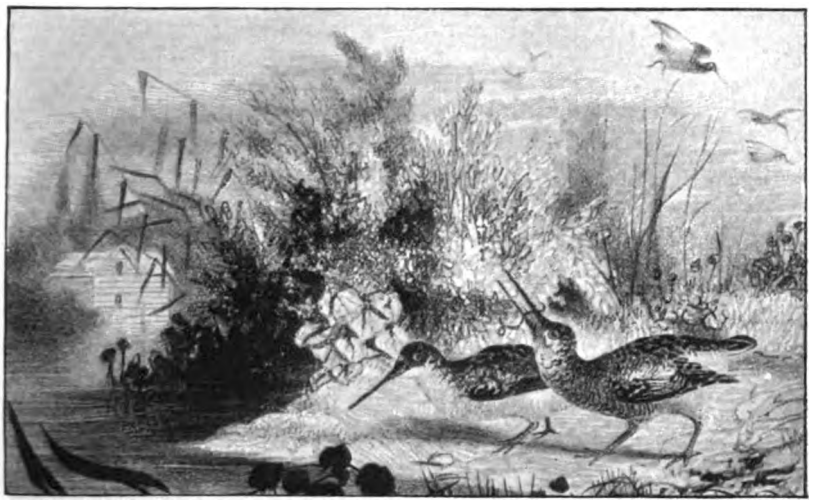
The sun is nearing the western horizon and looks big and red through the hot dusty air. The high hot west wind, which has been blowing since late morning, is now falling, but everything is so heated up that it will be hours before the air will begin to regain that refreshing coolness which is so characteristic of an Indian early morning. The whole country looks desolate, the burnt jungle and scorched trees lending a very bleak appearance to the scene. The elephants and beaters are tired out, and so are we, when our host gives the now welcome signal to stop the sport. The beaters and elephants at once make for the river and drink of the hot polluted stream as if it were a cool fountain. We are treated to something more to our taste, and then, as the sun drops suddenly behind yonder sandhill, we get into our dog-carts, and, tired, dirty, scratched, but happy, make for the bungalow. Before we have driven the three miles, night has fallen, pariah dogs bark at us from neighbouring villages, and the jackals, grown bold in the darkness, howl in a dismal manner. Through the now still air we hear the murmur of

many voices in the country round, for the population of this district is nearly 1,000 to the square mile, and the distant beating of a tom-tom away to the north declares a wedding ceremony in progress.

A bath, clean clothes, and cigarettes make new beings of us, and we stroll down to the stables and see the pig laid out, where they look big and terrible in the pale moonlight. After this, the head groom cuts off their heads, and the flesh is divided amongst the syces and grass-cuts, who will spend most of the night round great bonfires roasting, and feasting, and talking.

A good dinner under the cooling influence of great punkahs is a very grateful ceremony. It is very late before our host has replied to the drinking of his health—'with Highland honours'—and we sing 'Auld Lang Syne' and retire to our beds to fall into dreamless sleep.

SNIPE AFTER SNIPE ROSE AND DASHED AWAY



SNIPE

BY E. F. T. BENNETT

'WHERE are your snipe, boy?' said my uncle when I showed him my modest bag of a brace of golden plover, a duck, and a hare.

'I never shoot at one, for I can't hit 'em,' said I.

'What! not shoot at snipe in Mayo?'—and the good man turned on his heel in great disgust.

It was not my gun's fault nor my setter's fault, but my own entirely, that made me give up attempting to knock over snipe; and, as others have failed too, perhaps, after reading this, they will take heart, try again, and learn too to bring down the long-bills.

Next day I started by myself with the setter, as usual—for my old-fashioned muzzle-loader could not be tolerated in a party—and was soon striding over the spongy bog, watching the untiring gallop of the dog.

Soon there was a set, and in flushing the bird I either killed or missed—the latter most likely, but I forget—anyway it was not a snipe that I shot at, for I had given them up as hopeless.

As luck would have it, however, my line led me through a

rushy part of the bog where the setting of the dog was continuous, and snipe after snipe rose and dashed away. They were so thick that I called the dog to heel and practised aiming; while doing so I saw that I was fairly on one, and touched the trigger. 'Seek dead,' I quietly said to my wise companion, and the grateful look that I got when she was allowed to hunt once more was very encouraging to me. However, I kept her to heel, shot eight and a half brace in a very short time, and received the congratulations of my uncle when I reached home. Evidently I held the gun straight, and the snipe were rising just at the proper distance.

This, of course, I did not know then, but a careful study of the habits of snipe will make the sportsman aware that they rise at different distances according to the state of the weather and ground. Thus on dry ground one may expect to find the snipe lying close, and rising at one's very feet, and to hit them when they do this the sportsman must have patience and let the bird get well away. In wet ground with little cover the birds often rise far out of shot, but those that get up at between twenty and thirty yards offer the best mark of all, and a day of such shooting will teach more than any other as to when to pull the trigger.

A hair trigger is, of course, an abomination. It is by shooting at snipe when too near that so much missing occurs. The man who drops the bird that rises at twenty-five yards before it has gone five more must give up this snap shooting if he wishes to make a bag out of birds rising at his feet.

One man who was making this mistake said, 'Why can't I hit them?' The few he had in his bag were a sufficient answer; for, being an extraordinarily quick shot, the birds were blown to pieces. So he altered his style and let the birds get away before he put up his gun, and then down they came properly.

After a dark night snipe will be found in bright-looking marshy places, and after a bright moonlight night dark bogs are the places to hunt.

Snipe shooters have all sorts of theories as to how to walk to their game; but, as far as I know, the great thing to aim at is to get the wind at your back, for the snipe always rises up-wind and will never go down-wind if he can help it, so you are sure of a crossing shot; but if you shoot at the bird you won't hit him, for you must be well ahead to bring him down, as his flight is so rapid.

On a perfectly quiet day, snipe rise anywhere and fly any way, and their pace can be judged of by the fact that, unless you

THERE ARE NO WILDER BIRDS THAN SNIPE

aim well above the bird that is going straight away, you never hit him, but will see your shot strike a long way under him.

Walking down-wind to your game sounds all wrong for your dog, but he knows what to do quite well, for he will go straight away from you and quarter the ground towards you; and as you walk up to the set and get nearer and nearer to your wise friend, you can almost believe that he is pointing out exactly where the bird is. So up it starts with its wild croak, and down it comes if you can shoot snipe well.

Shooting snipe in paddy fields or in Irish bogs is a very easy business compared to shooting the stray birds that rise out of ditches in England, for each one of them does something that none of the others has ever done before, and consequently each separate shot is a new experience; and after shooting at partridges or pheasants, the snipe looks like a small butterfly going about a thousand miles an hour. Be it remembered, however, that he is only going at about sixty or seventy, and that your only chance is coolness. So, too, with the jack snipe that you so often strive after and never hit in England; you can, however, hit him on a bog. I well remember six shots consecutively without a miss, and that not by a crack snipe shot by any means, and his name need not be mentioned because he is too modest about the feat.

These six jacks all did exactly the same thing, rising near and flickering about still near, and all settling into a steadier flight at the same distance, when bang went the gun and each of the pretty little fellows fell.

To observe at what distance the snipe are rising on a particular day is the best way to ensure success. If at one's feet, the gun must not be put up, and this will allow the bird to get away, and enable the shooter really to see his game before he attempts to shoot. If at the right distance of between twenty and thirty yards, the quicker you can shoot the better, and some good snipe shots drop their birds as they spring up, for the snipe evidently makes use of his long legs to give his long wings a good start.

There are no wilder birds than snipe, and shooting over the same ground too often, when the weather is not changeable, will drive them away altogether. With alternating dark and bright nights, however, the birds regularly move to fixed feeding grounds, and in them they are sure to be found.

Wild storms, too, often have the effect of re-stocking ground that for a long time has been birdless. There is a fascination

about snipe shooting that is different from all other sport. On a bright November day on a wild bog, when the dead, stunted heather is a soft brown and the loughs are deep blue, fringed with rushes that look like sheets of gold, the delight of living can be really felt. The bird, as it rushes away, gives the note of life to the beautiful dead scene, and, even as it falls, the flash of pure white, till then not seen, makes a fitting finish to one view of the picture.

There is one great drawback, however, to this sport being enjoyable for those who are seldom exposed to the weather, and that is the perpetual state of sloppiness of the Irish bog; for to have wet feet all day and every day must be the fate of the snipe shooter. This must mean discomfort to begin with, and possibly rheumatism and colds to end with; and as so many dwellers in towns take their holidays in fine summer weather it is not likely that snipe shooting will ever be what fishing is for the many.

So the snipe shooter will go on getting wet, and drying his stockings for next day, or putting on wet ones if none are dry; he will try to dry his boots by filling them with oats every night, and will keep them soft by plenty of dubbing. He will sleep like a top and eat like a cormorant, and laugh and kick his heels about when he is dry and warm at home. Good luck to him, more power to his elbow, and plenty of straight powder and No. 8 shot; or, if he thinks well, No. 6 in his left for long shots and bigger game, and No. 8 in his right barrel; or rather let him manage this himself, for some of the best shots shoot with their left first.

As for his dog, what could he do without it on those great wastes, and what would snipe shooting be alone in those dreary places? The dog must be with him if he wants to find game, and when there is no game the sight of the racing dog will make up for it, and be the best of good company.

UMPIRES AND SOME UMPIRE STORIES

BY W. J. FORD

I HAVE often wondered if the men who, like myself, have come back to the pavilion with a growl in their heart and a scowl on their face have ever considered what the umpire's task is like. All cricketers have plenty of 'umpire stories' to tell (some of which are as chimerical as 'fish stories'), and I hope to spin one or two later on in this paper, but it is seldom that we realise what a fatiguing business is involved in the umpire's profession. If anyone wants to test it, let him take the place for a one-day match when no great interests are involved. By lunch-time he will quite appreciate a rest, and will be deeply grateful if the interval is not the strict forty-five minutes allowed at Lord's. If at four o'clock an innings is over he will thank his lucky stars, especially if some kindly lady has provided tea at five, thereby giving him another rest; and when stumps are drawn, he, the amateur umpire, who has been seeking rest and finding none, or only a little, will discover that he has done as hard a day's work as he cares for. Yet, *quâ* umpire, he has had a very easy time, and for a single day only. Now look at what the professional umpire has to do, not for a day, but for day upon day, during three or four months. He is the first man to go to the wickets and the last man to leave them. The match lasts for three days if the weather is fine and the wicket is fast; and when it is over he may have to travel from Southampton to Manchester by a night

train, and turn up full of alacrity to start afresh at the same old drudgery. To me, who have acted not infrequently as an amateur umpire, and have, no doubt, shared the curses which are the badge of the tribe, it is a mystery how human endurance can stand the work; for, mark you, the umpire has no rest except the luncheon interval. If an innings is concluded, he is hardly in the pavilion before the bell rings for the next innings, having had a hasty and unsatisfactory suck at a pipe, and, let us hope, at something else. (As the umpire's friend, I should like to propose that he be allowed to smoke on duty.) Now this is the history of his life from day to day for some four months: on his legs for full six hours, and at 'attention' the whole time. He need not be physically active, it is true, except when a vicious square-leg hit or a hot 'return' comes his way, in which event he may, if he be not active, carry off a memento of the day. Mentally, he has to be active to the nth; he must have the laws at the tips of his fingers; their interpretation and his verdict on the tip of his tongue. He must cultivate a sort of second-sight, for he has to watch the bowler's arm and foot simultaneously while at the bowler's end, and the batsman and wicket-keeper simultaneously if at the other end. Will some amateur try to do these things only, and communicate with me if he is perfectly sure that he can always be right in his verdicts on 'stumps,' 'run-outs,' and 'no-balls'?

Now we come to something difficult: the decision on the points previously mentioned are comparatively simple. The real cruces are 'leg-before' and 'caught at the wicket.' What the conditions are for the former decision every cricketer knows, but he also knows equally well how often the umpire is called upon to stand 'a little wider' that the batsman may get a better sight of the ball, and it is just that 'little wider' which prevents the umpire from getting a perfect sight of the line of the ball: yet if he says 'Out!' the batsman is up in arms, and the bowler says 'he never saw a clearer case,' and probably cover-point chips in with the assurance of his positive conviction. If he says 'Not out!' he has eleven infuriated men to face instead of one, so, perhaps, he is wiser, in cases of doubt, to give an affirmative decision, though I am aware that this is bad law, and am only arguing in the interest of the umpire's further existence.

As to a catch at the wicket, I propose to offer two stories illustrative of facts, and both personal, so if anyone gets weary of this wretched pronoun of the first person, he had better turn to the next article; but the *ego* cannot always be avoided.

Case I., then. I caught a man, as I thought, at the wicket, the ball going between leg and bat and hitting something. 'How's that?' 'Out!' 'Why, it hit me on the leg!' 'Very sorry, old fellow.' (It was an old friend.) But the umpire had given the batsman out as leg-before, which he wasn't, while I had appealed for a catch, which also 'wasn't.' Another time I caught the rival keeper off a very small one. 'Out!' He went away, apparently unhappy, and we conferred afterwards, when he admitted that he had hit the ball, but didn't think any umpire could have heard it. Thoms was the umpire, so we questioned him. 'No, sir; I heard nothing, but saw the ball swerve. I never give a man out unless I see the catch.' And herein lies a large piece of sound advice for all who may be called upon to fulfil the thankless post.

There are, I believe, nine ways of being out according to law, and on Tom Emmett is fathered the dictum that there is a tenth way—'Given out wrong by umpires.' Now to all batsmen who are given out in the tenth way I hereby make an appeal, not to upset the vials of their wrath on the umpire's head from this time forth for evermore. Will they try to realise, from theory if not from practice, the infinite difficulty, infinite weariness, and infinite monotony of a post which carries with it no intermediate rest, and demands incessant attention and unwearying application? If you are, as you imagine, given out wrongly, reserve your comments till afterwards, and allow the man credit for having done his best: he is probably the most weary man of the whole twenty-four. His adverse verdict, which may be obviously wrong, has been given in the utmost *bona fides*, and yet, even if you do not agree with him, he may have been right and you wrong.

To my own mind, the umpires are men who have the hardest work on either side, as not only do they get the least rest physically, but they have also a tremendous mental strain, and as umpires are at work for six days in the week, under the best cricket conditions, and players only, let us say, four, it is little short of inhuman (I nearly said something else) to turn round and abuse a man for a decision given in all good faith.

Now having posed as the apostle and champion of the umpire, I am sure he will let me romance away in a friendly fashion at his expense; but by 'romance' nothing more is meant than that the yarns which follow have only come to me in some instances at second or third hand. To tell the truth, there are few stories to be found and told against the first-class umpire, saving the ancient story about Fuller Pilch and E. M. Grace, which is in

another book. It is the local umpire and his kith and kin who help the anecdotist forward to the haven where he would be. Yet I must record, for the benefit of the few that have never heard or have forgotten the story, that the worst decision ever given was in a first-class match played between Sussex and Middlesex: C. P. Foley was actually given 'out' for having handled the *bail!* Of course the chivalrous W. L. Murdoch insisted on the batsman's return to the wicket, but for the decision no excuse can be offered except temporary aberration of intellect, a distemper which must have been shared by the bowler who made the appeal.

Now for a story or two. A certain noble lord was once batting, while his footman was operating as umpire, and it became the painful duty of the latter to give his master out l.b.w. A word of apology was clearly due, so the umpire approached the cricketer after the innings was over with, 'Very sorry, my lord, to have to give your lordship out, but the ball pitched straight for your lordship's wicket, and your lordship's leg was right in front of your lordsh——' 'That'll do, John. Your decision was all right, but damn your oratory!' Let us hope that it was the same footman who was enabled to give a verdict in his master's favour on another occasion, when my lord, who was keeping wicket, stumped a man and turned round to the umpire with the usual 'How's that?' John wished to give an affirmative answer, and, with the familiar formula which came far more readily to his lips than 'Out!' said, 'Not at home, my lord! not at home!' Which leads on to another 'stumping' story which may be fathered on Roberts, or Peall, or Mitchell, not the cricketers, but the billiard-players of those names. Whoever it was, he was more at home with the cue than with the bat, and was largely impressed with the importance of not being stumped. So having got guard, inspected the field, and adjusted his cap in due and ancient form, he turned round to the umpire with, 'Just tell me, marker, is my right foot in baulk?' 'Marker' and 'baulk' are sweetly pretty.

The following dialogue is vouched for; of course it was a village-green match.

'Wide!'

'What did you say, Mr. Stumps? Wide?'

'Yes, wide!'

'Wide! Why he struck at it!'

'Struck at it, did 'e? Well, then, not wide! Hover!'

The following is a more or less umpire story, and so many

men have told it to me as having come under their own cognisance that I firmly believe it must have happened somewhere. A local farmer of importance volunteered to lend his meadow for the village matches, and, as a matter of compliment, was invited to play in the opening match, though he was no cricketer. As a further attention, he was put in first, but was caught at the wickets in less than no time. 'Out!' said the umpire. 'WHAT? Out? Out? Then out you all goes of this blooming field!' And, if report be true, the landlord was allowed a second innings, in the interests of peace, and cricket, and a ground to play on. Another famous dictum of a country umpire must be recorded, though it is a bit of a chestnut. A first-class wicket-keeper, playing in a village match, pulled off a very clever bit of stumping, and made his appeal, 'How's that?' A short pause; then came the verdict—'Woonderful!'

Some bowlers have a habit of following up their bowling straight down the wicket; I've done it myself, and it once cost our side more than a hundred runs, as the umpire couldn't see a well-established l.b.w. Umpires are sometimes more scrupulous, and are content to refer the question to the umpire at the striker's end. Unless the narrator of the following story has been getting at me, he was batting, he avers, and was smitten on the leg, whereupon came a confident appeal (as the sporting papers call it) for leg-before. The proper umpire remarks, 'Couldn't see it; the bowler was in the way. How was it, Jack?' to the arbiter at short-leg, who was all there with, 'Why, "out," of course. Clearest case as ever I saw.' Truly batsmen have something to endure.

Here is a cricket crux, which is said to have occurred in a match. The bowler fired up a straight yorker; the batsman, not a W. G., managed to get his foot in front of the wicket, and to chop down with his bat behind his foot. The ball hit the foot, and the bowler appealed with enthusiasm for l.b.w. 'Not out,' said the umpire; 'the ball wouldn't have hit the wicket, as his bat was behind his foot.' Is this good law? I think so.

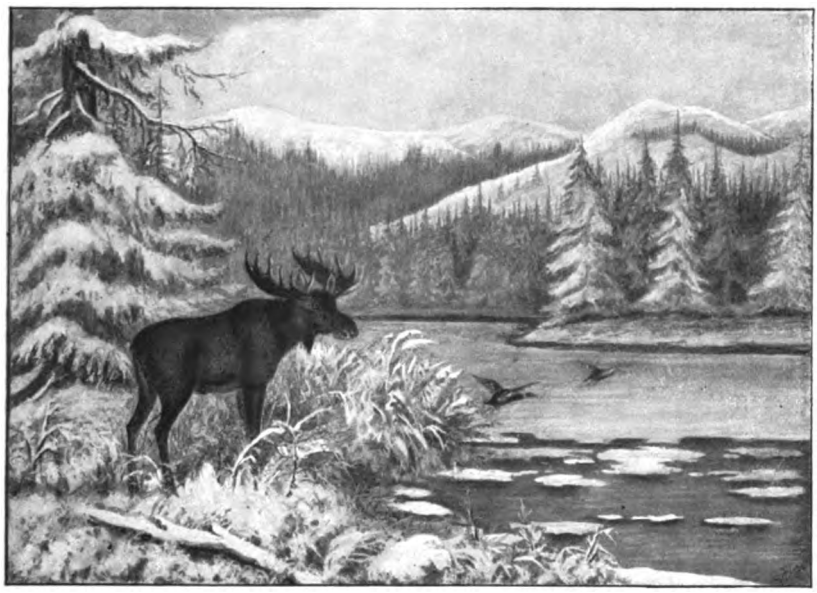
HOW I SHOT MY FIFTIETH ELK

BY CAPTAIN GERARD FERRAND

SHALL I shoot my fiftieth elk? was the question which forcibly presented itself to my mind one October morning in the beginning of the 'eighties, that same morning being the dawn of the last day of the elk-hunting season in North Trondhjem's Amt, Norway.

Up to this date I had succeeded in bagging forty-nine animals by dint of hard work during many years, and was very eager to make the number up to fifty as a lucky finish to the season. I therefore lost no time in starting soon after breakfast, and left my log shanty about the hour of eight, accompanied by a strong, active Norsk peasant who had followed me in the chase for many years, also taking with me my two elk-hounds. As the woods were very near to the house, we soon began to look for tracks, and in about a couple of hours struck the trail of a solitary bull. After following this for some time through dense timber we emerged upon open ground, overlooking a picturesque lake called Röe-Vand or Char-Lake, some three and a half miles in circuit, which was partially frozen over and covered with snow, the dislocated masses of old ice being interspersed with the new, and presenting a curious appearance. There we made a halt. I carefully scanned the surrounding country far and near with my field-glasses without success, and was on the point of returning them to the case when I caught the sound of ducks quacking

below me, followed soon afterwards by the crunching of the frozen snow-crust. On turning my gaze to the direction whence the sounds came I spied a duck and mallard flying from a reedy corner, and in another moment had the gratification of seeing the stately form of a fine bull-elk gradually expanding into view from out the forest below. He proceeded slowly and calmly to the edge of the lake, where he stopped to scent the air and look around him. He appeared to be about seven years old and had a tolerably good pair of antlers; but as he was not within a reasonable distance for a shot, and the place a very difficult one in which to stalk him, I



HE STOPPED TO SCENT THE AIR AND LOOK AROUND HIM

concluded to lie down and watch him with my glasses, and critically inspected him, wondering whether or not he was destined to be my fiftieth? He gave me very little time for speculating on that point, however, as, having apparently made up his mind to go through with a disagreeable business, he soon started off again in a decided manner, crashing slowly, though determinedly, through the thin crust of new ice, which covered the shallow water near the strand, until he got into the deep open lake, when he proceeded to swim across to the woods on the opposite shore. We watched him until he had crossed over, and finally disappeared into the gloom of the forest on the other side. We then

hurried after him as fast as possible, quickly skirting the shore of the lake, but were forced to wade through the river which there enters it, the strong current being above our knees and icy cold. We soon hit off the tracks when we had got round, and followed them over a stiff snow-covered bog for some distance, and then along a densely wooded slope until we came to a dark dell bounded by a succession of steep ledges on one side, where I proceeded carefully forward to reconnoitre. Suddenly I caught the sound of cracking sticks, and on glancing through the mass of *débris* ahead saw the dark form of the bull passing along a small

CRASHING LIKE A TORNADO THROUGH THE FOREST

open glade to my left. It was apparent to me now that the animal was on the hunt after a female, and it would take some smart running in order to overhaul him; it was quite impossible to move quickly or silently in such a place, with a view to cutting him off, and the idea of shooting at him with any chance of success was entirely out of the question. So I left him unmolested as, keeping up a gentle trot, he flitted past me like the flash of a meteor, and not more than eighty yards off, but quickly vanishing out of sight and sound. I then hastened back to my companion, and we slipped both the dogs on his spoor, speedily following them on the trail. As he was not going very fast and the timber was

thick they soon caught him up, and away they all raced together, the bull crashing like a tornado through the forest, smashing through the small dead fallen trees and branches which encumbered his path, and the dogs awakening all the echoes of the wooded hills and glens with their exciting music. He turned a little to one side at first and seemed inclined to come my way, but disappointed me, and I again caught no more than a hasty glimpse of him as he dashed madly past me through a narrow forest glade, whilst I was hurriedly floundering along through the snow to cut him off; but ne'er a shot could I get at his swiftly

BOTH DOGS WERE FURIOUSLY BARKING JUST AHEAD OF HIM

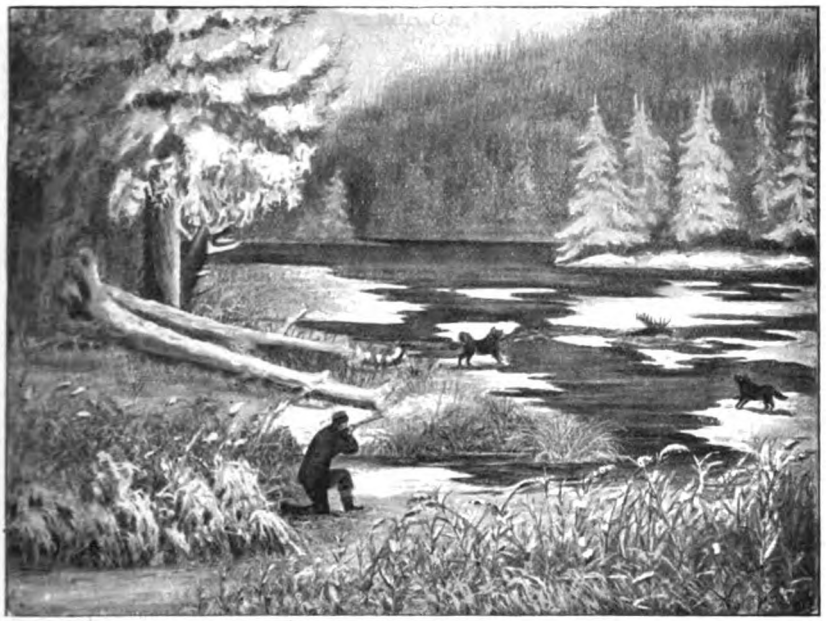
retreating form. At length, after some stiff going and many a rough tumble over the fallen timber, we discovered by certain indications that he had stopped running, so I put on a spurt through a thickly wooded grove of spruce and birch, beyond which, in an open boggy glade near the lake, I saw him standing at bay. Both dogs were furiously barking just ahead of him, and apparently endeavouring to prevent him taking again to the open water, which was only a short distance from the frozen shore. I hastened cautiously up to about ninety yards of the spot, knelt down by the side of a fir-tree, and fired. Unluckily, the instant I pulled the trigger he started off again; however, he

reeled as he received the shot, falling forward on one knee, but recovered himself and swerved sharply round, making for the timber again. I gave him a parting snapshot, which hit him somewhere in one of the loins, but failed to stop his course. Immediately reloading, I rushed after him on the blood-covered trail, which led us through some of the most intricate woods imaginable, but after a time I hit upon an open place leading to the lake shore. Of this I took advantage, and ran frantically along the ice and through masses of reeds and rushes in order to cut him off, as I heard him coming round again to the lake, but had the ill luck to arrive just a second or two too late, and experienced the mortification of seeing him bounding rapidly out some distance ahead, and crashing through the thin skin of new ice into the water, on his way to the wooded island some two hundred and fifty yards from the shore. My dogs would not face the water, as dogs of this species rarely will in cold weather when there is ice, so they stood some distance apart, furiously baying on the ice at the edge of the water. I had three or four long shots at him, but he swam low and very fast, and never stopped till he reached the sloping shore of the island, up which he seemed unable to raise himself, so swam slowly alongside until he came to shallow water and a more level beach. I had now only two cartridges left, having stupidly omitted to put a spare pouch into the lunch-bag, so feared to risk another long shot. At last he struggled slowly up the slope and stood on level ground for about ten minutes, gazing sadly around him, and, as I looked at him, I feared even now it was within the bounds of possibility that he might escape me.

The day was quickly passing away, and no time was to be lost, for there straight before me in the flesh, in the most tantalising situation, badly wounded and separated by only two hundred or two hundred and fifty yards of ice and water, stood my fiftieth elk—that is to say, mine if I could only manage to finish him off on the spot! So I squatted down on the snow and watched him. The dogs all this time were furiously baying him, by way of protest at his unlooked-for escape, but by no persuasions of mine could they be induced to go nearer than the edge of the ice. By-and-by, as I found the snow-covered surface of the ice was by no means a comfortable or luxurious place to recline upon and as the animal showed no signs of moving, I determined to wake him up with one more shot, so took a careful aim behind his right shoulder and fired. He staggered forward at the shot, and I made sure he was about to fall; but to my surprise he recovered himself, slowly clambered up the bank and disappeared

amongst the dense covert of spruce firs with which the island was overgrown.

I waited a few minutes, scanning the spot with my glasses, making sure he must soon lie down and die, as it seemed an impossibility he could escape. The puzzle now was how to reach the island. My man spoke of a small boat used for fishing purposes, which he thought was kept in the river that entered the lake, not far off; I therefore sent him at once to look for it, and to get it ready if there, and followed shortly after with the dogs in the direction he had taken. He rejoined me in about twenty minutes



I HAD THREE OR FOUR SHOTS AT HIM

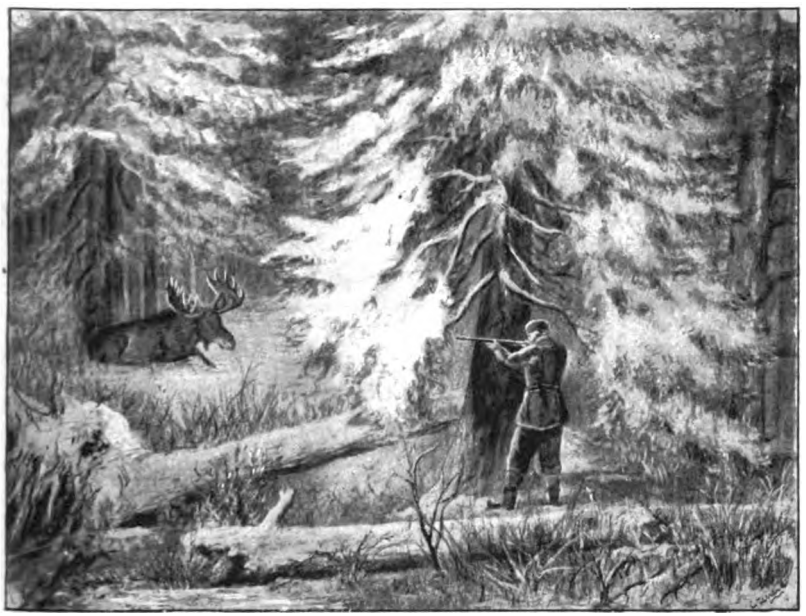
with the unwelcome information that the boat was not there, and that our best plan was to go at once to a small *gaard* (farm-house) situated in the woods at some distance off, where the owners of the boat lived. We therefore started off at a brisk pace, and on arrival luckily found them at home. They were ready enough to come with us, but informed us that their boat was on another lake about half a mile off. However, they soon harnessed a horse to a long sleigh and started off to fetch it, telling us to meet them at the lake.

In the meantime I took advantage of the interval to have

some lunch; after which we tied up both the dogs in the stable, as I did not want them for this job, and then left for the scene of the tragedy. We soon overtook the men with the boat, and all proceeded merrily across the snow-covered bogs and through the dense woods down to the lake shore. There we launched the boat and rowed out, breaking through the thin ice which here covered the surface. On reaching the island I landed at the point where we had last seen the bull, and followed his tracks, feeling sure I should soon find him either dead or at his last gasp; but I was doomed to disappointment. For what was my astonishment and disgust on searching that lonely isle, instead of meeting the bull face to face, to find he had actually succeeded in making his escape! But where?

On the other side of the island there were only loose boulders with no snow on them, as, being on the south side, the sun's rays had melted most of it at that spot, and under the trees, which grew very thickly together, there was very little snow to guide one. It was evident, however, that he had taken to the water again, but it was difficult to determine in which direction he had gone. There was open water from the island all the way to the opposite shore, and as far as the outlet of the lake; I therefore searched along the surface with my glasses, hoping to see him floating dead in the water, but nothing of the kind was visible. By this time twilight was fast approaching, so we rowed quickly across to the woods opposite. There being no thin ice for him to break through, we had no clue to guide us, so rowed along the shore, carefully searching the banks, but finding no traces of him; we then reached the outlet of the lake, down which we rowed for half a mile or so, but without success, and were finally stopped by some rapids, having to retrace our course, searching both banks for the second time, until we entered the lake again. At last, just as it was getting dusk, we found the trail on the mainland opposite the northernmost point of the island. I quickly sprang ashore, and followed the tracks, proceeding very carefully, as after my recent experiences I could not feel at all sure of him, and had no means of knowing whether he was mortally wounded or not; and, since I had only one cartridge left, I could not afford to throw it away on another snap-shot. The woods were very dense here, and darkness was fast setting in, whilst masses of fallen timber, with dead spiking branches, lying about in every conceivable position, with a luxuriant undergrowth of wild raspberry canes and mountain ash seedlings, did not tend to decrease the difficulties of the sur-

roundings. At length, having followed the trail for several hundred paces, I suddenly caught sight of the bull's antlers, and in another moment had the supreme gratification of seeing him lying on the ground, with his nose resting on the snow. I crept cautiously up to a large spruce fir about fifteen or twenty yards off before he became aware of my presence. He tried hard to rise as soon as he saw me, but his strength failed him, and I promptly finished him off with my last remaining cartridge. The men coming up soon after, we all together hauled him along the frozen snow down to the lake shore. As the boat was too small

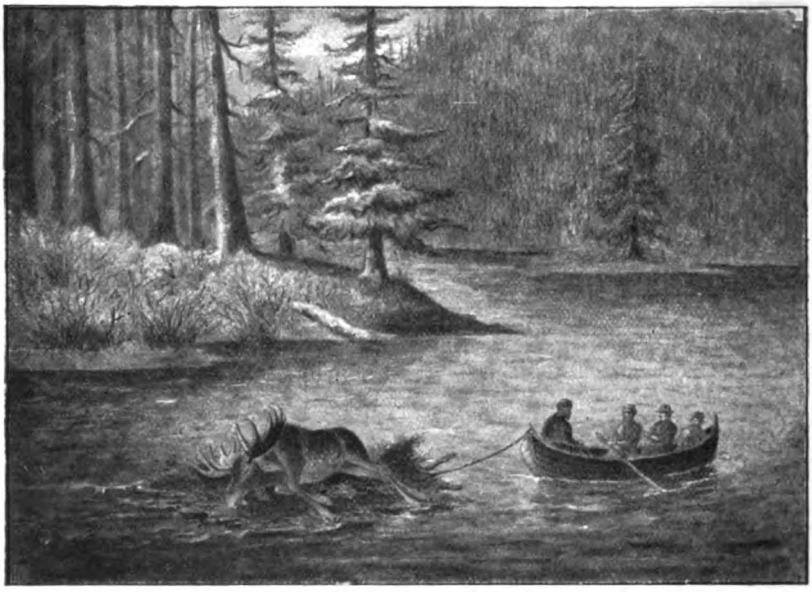


I FINISHED HIM OFF WITH MY LAST CARTRIDGE

to hold all of us with the elk as well, we constructed a rough raft with the drift-wood and dead timber which lay around, the owners of the boat having each brought an axe in case of emergencies. We then dragged the bull on to it, and fixed him there, after which we towed him across the lake in the gloom of the evening in a heavy snow-storm, which began directly after we had started. Having crossed over, we pulled him on to the sleigh, and drove him through the snow-covered woods to the gaard.

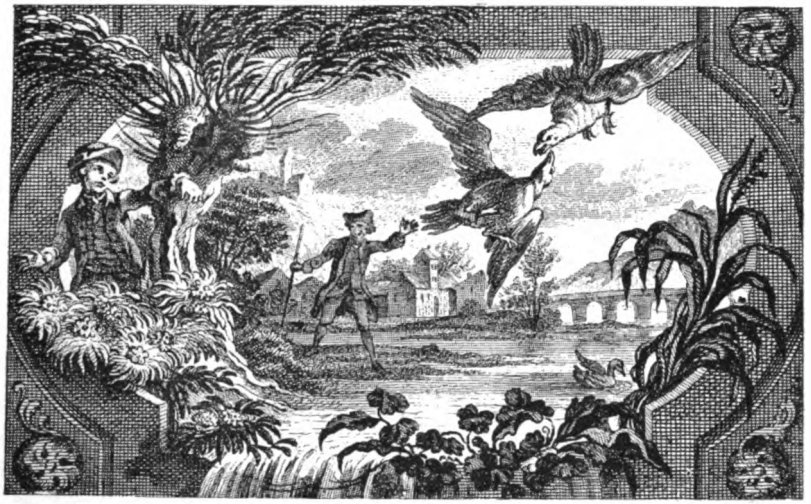
It was past ten o'clock when I arrived at my own shanty in a storm of wind and drifting snow, but very well satisfied at

having bagged my fiftieth elk after all. He was a fine heavy animal, with an unusually dark brown skin. There were no more than six points to each antler, but they were of a good size, the horns were well palmated and symmetrical, and, considering the few points, fairly large and heavy. I found five bullets in the carcass when we skinned him—four in the body, besides the finishing shot. This experience is naturally no criterion as to the efficacy or otherwise of a Purdey ·450 Express, which I was using at the time with nearly solid bullets and a large charge of powder, as the first two were practically mere snap-shots, and



TOWED HIM ACROSS THE LAKE

when I fired at him whilst swimming away in the water they were not easy ones by any means. I have, in fact, killed many a full-grown bull-elk with one bullet only from the same rifle, and more than one bear. It is sometimes a very difficult matter to place a bullet accurately in a vital part after severe exercise and quick running, even under the most favourable circumstances. When using a small-bore rifle, it is, therefore, desirable to practise more than ordinary care and caution with animals which charge, such as tigers, lions, bisons, bears, &c. Snap-shots, as a rule, should be strictly avoided by a novice unless the shooter is in a safe place.



AN EVENING ON DUTCH SKATES

BY MRS. ALEC TWEEDIE

In the cities of Holland more people probably skate at night than during the day. This, of course, does not apply to country districts where frozen canals form the chief high roads through the skating months, and where the people naturally convey their goods to the nearest market while daylight lasts.

In the towns this is different; night skating is for pleasure and not for business. Thousands of young folk who are employed all day in shops, warehouses, post-offices, &c. are free in the evening to enjoy themselves to the best of their ability; to take as much exercise as they can, accompanied by amusement; and therefore it is that after eight o'clock the frozen waterways are a teeming mass of human life. They become, in fact, one huge fair. Chattering men and joyous maidens, elderly fathers and fat, round mothers, small children who for the nonce are allowed to stay out of bed, all wend their way, skates in hand, to the canals and enjoy an hour or two of healthful exercise in the dim light of evening before returning home for the night.

The scenes are gay and animated, and most marvellously picturesque. Here and there a booth has been erected whereat tea or steaming potatoes and sausages are sold, or a 'kop' of

coffee, thoroughly stewed, as all Dutch coffee is, temptingly invites the passer-by to partake of light refreshment. This booth is lighted by various blazing beacons placed in those iron stands which we in this country politely designate 'devils.' The booth itself is often a very primitive structure, made with four poles thrust into the ice, covered with brown canvas, and adorned perhaps by a little paling, so that it looks more like a gipsy's tent than an ordinary booth at a fair. The table inside is very unpretentious; but the planks on trestles serve the purpose of holding the boiling urns and the cups and saucers. A few chairs placed round the fire give a cosy look to the interior; and as the skater flits past, the effect of light and warmth, merriment and joy, emitted from the tiny shed is very pleasant—the lurid glare from the blazing fire casting a rosy hue on the occupants whose forms throw quaint shadows on the canvas walls.

Here and there at intervals along the ice other fires are kindled, not so much for warmth, perhaps, as to shed a shimmering glow of light upon the frozen surface; for so many skaters flying hither and thither in darkness, at the terrific speed they practise in Holland, would be very dangerous but for these flaring beacons.

The charm of Rotterdam is not its museums or its pictures, but its waterways, its queer corners and endless bridges. Leaving the hotel on the quay, designated by the awful name of De Boompjes, which literally means *trees*—for there are some small specimens planted along its edge in the form of an avenue—we sally forth to skate. It is a strange thing to find the best hotel of the town standing on a quay, literally in the midst of the docks, before which steamers of all kinds are held fast in the ice, while on the embankment are piled up cases of goods, with here and there enormous cranes such as denote shipping life. Yet this is the most fashionable part of Rotterdam. There are some fine private houses on De Boompjes besides hotels, and it is altogether the aristocratic as well as business quarter of a town where it is the custom for families to live over 'the office.'

Standing at sunset on the main bridge spanning the Rhine, and seeing the busy quay with miles and miles of shipping enveloped in the rosy hues of evening, reminds one vividly of a Turner picture. There is that rich warmth of colouring, that wonderful clearness of detail mixed with those hazy effects, so characteristic of Turner in his early days. Indeed, on a fine sunset night no scene could possibly be more beautiful than that spread before the visitor who stands on the bridges of Rotterdam. Big ships can go up the canals leading from the main waterway; two or

THE FROZEN WATERWAYS BECOME ONE HUGE FAIR

three times a day the bridges divide in the middle and are drawn straight up into the air by chains, while a little procession of vessels passes through. All the traffic of the town is stopped for the time, but even commercial people in Holland do not hurry themselves: they have that slow, solid determination and that not easily disturbed temperament of the hardy Norsemen, which nothing excites. As we pass on to the skating ground we watch the train running along the whole length of the town overhead, as it does in New York, and under part of a bridge of this mounted railway we get a peep at the market. The Groote Market, the enormous cheese market with its terrible and awful smells, and the hall where fish is sold, are worth a visit; they are intensely Dutch, these fat women in short skirts made so full at the waist that the wearers appear broader than need be, while the pretty muslin caps studded with golden pins seem the very essence of a living Dutch doll. All these kindly, round-faced folk are, alas! no better looking than they were in the days of Gerard Dow, Van Ostade, Teniers, &c. Strangely enough, in all the pictures of that time the Dutch women, even when out of doors, generally appeared gowned in low dresses!

The fish at the market are complacently swimming about alive in huge tanks placed in rows, our idea of dead fish shops being considered by the thrifty Dutchman simply ridiculous.

We had arranged to skate from Rotterdam to Gouda; but before doing so we decided to have a trial trip with Dutch skates on the canals of the town. It is a delightful journey from Rotterdam to Gouda, and from Gouda to Amsterdam. Leaving Rotterdam one skates over the ice through the Hague, Leiden, Haarlem, to Amsterdam; or from Leiden to Utrecht by the Rhine. 'Man proposes, God disposes,' however; and although we arranged our plans and made everything ready to skate to Amsterdam the thaw came, and that particular expedition was frustrated.

For any length of journey, it is absolutely necessary to use Dutch skates. These are from sixteen to twenty inches long, and the turn-up of the toe allows the blade to skid over the ice, instead of hitting it. These Dutch skates are made of wood and are very shallow, the feet being raised little more than an inch from the ice. The funny part of them is they are not secured to the boot at all, but are merely attached by cord, which stretches from the heelstrap across the foot, and is tied in a big bow over the toe. The cords are generally bright yellow, and give a fantastic appearance to the foot-gear. The reason for wearing things so easily adjusted is to be found in the fact that

when skating great distances one often has to cross a tract of land or walk along a bit of road, when it becomes necessary to stoop down, untie the bow, and, skates in hand, trudge along to the next piece of ice. Therefore in the country one often sees the market folk bend down, untie their cord, kick off their skates, and march along for five or ten minutes till they reach the canal they want, when they slip their feet back into position and in a moment are skating away again. When it is a matter of merely crossing a road or walking a short distance, they do not take off their skates at all. This, to a figure skater, must sound dreadful and most disrespectful to the art, because sharp blades are absolutely essential to his performance; but the reader must remember that figure skating is almost unknown in Holland, where, as in Norway and Russia, long-distance skating is the rule, and speed the end to be attained. This arises from the fact that in these countries they have such severe and continued frosts that the whole country is often icebound; consequently such a thing as swept ice is almost impossible, and the large tracts of frozen waterways become very rough by reason of the wind, which blows the newly formed ice into little ridges, and the snow which collects upon its surface into small hummocks. It is because of this roughness on the surface of the ice that these long bladed skates are necessary, for they will carry the wearer over anything, cracks included.

Having reached the canal we stepped down a wooden plank on to the ice, where a friendly Dutchman fixed our skates. Fixed? Loosely bound them on would be a more appropriate expression; but as he assured us that was quite enough we proceeded on our way. It is very easy indeed to skate on Dutch blades, and we sped quite happily. What a delightful scene met our eyes! The funny old flat-bottomed barges frozen to the sides of the canal, the gay coloured articles of washing hanging out to dry in the frosty night air, the old women with baskets of bright-skinned oranges, and those delicious shades of red and brown that seem to pervade everything in Holland.

Small boys were running races, for someone on the bridge was throwing pennies for them to scramble for, and a tremendous scuffle was going on, in spite of the lads being on skates instead of their own feet. We almost wondered that the turn-up toes of the skates did not upset them; but they seemed to take to the blade as the duck takes to water, and they yelled and shrieked and laughed and made merry and tumbled about in a regular football scrimmage, and picked themselves up again, the victorious one

speeding away with his coin while all the other shrieking young rascals followed behind. What a helter-skelter crowd it was! No one seemed to tumble down, partly from the fact that the Dutch learn to go on blades when they are babies. The only danger appeared to lie in the extraordinary fashion in which people skate. Form, such as we know it, is an unheard-of art, as everyone tries to tear along as quickly as he or she possibly can, their arms going like windmills. It is not a graceful style of performance, but it serves the purpose, and the ice on which they skate practically prohibits outside edge and suchlike artistic performances. We were quite alarmed by some of the gymnastic feats of the youngsters, and, after a sudden and unexpected blow from a whirling arm, panting and gasping we hired a chair, and sat down free from the hustling of the seething crowd, in order quietly to regain our breath, and quietly contemplate the passers-by. That they enjoyed themselves there is no doubt, for never did youth seem more gay.

Suddenly, from under the bridge in the dim light, we saw a long, black, dark, moving mass emerge: it might be a walrus or a whale; it might be the great sea serpent itself, as it swayed from side to side, skidding over the ice at frantic speed. It was only a party of students out on a little pleasure tour. Among them they had a long skating pole, and having singled out the best performer, and put him in front, all his companions held on to the pole, one behind the other, until the whole dozen were arranged like onions on a stick, when away they wildly flew, their feet moving in unison as the great black mass tore from canal to canal, or rushed madly under and out of bridges. We learnt that this peculiar style of entertainment had arisen in consequence of the frequency of east winds in the Netherlands in winter. Had all those people been skating abreast each would have had to contend with the blast. As matters were, the first one only had to withstand the piercing wind, the others sheltering behind him and each other. As the lead is, therefore, more anxious and tiring, members composing the party change now and again, the one who was formerly in front being put for a change behind.

The excitement was infectious, and we felt we should like to follow this queer crowd. So up we got and started behind them; but they soon distanced us, for, not being particularly good skaters at any time, the novelty of Dutch blades made us somewhat less proficient than usual, and, in a few moments, the pole and its adherents were far, far away.

Ah! what was that noise? Music? Yes, undoubtedly

music, and in the starlight—for the stars were now shining brightly—we could see a whole party dancing round a fiery beacon. An old fiddler was playing a tune, and the young folk were having no end of a time dancing in their skates. Uncommonly well they did it, too, finally going through a kind of quadrille to the bowing of the one-eyed old musician. The music seemed to cause much excitement, and for a while the fun became fast and furious. Even a very stout old Dutchwoman, with a basket over her arm, joined the crowd, and, having looked on for a while, she could apparently stand the temptation no longer, for she bounced off into the midst of the dancing throng, where, alone with her basket, she performed queer antics in the middle. She was so tremendously stout, her face was so round and bonny, and her enjoyment so keen, that everyone laughed and applauded her movements. The old lady seemed much gratified; and the more the onlookers laughed, the more she danced on her skates, and the more hilarious she became. But presumably her feet must have slipped, whether on an odd piece of orange peel or a cabbage leaf history relates not—the dear old lady came down bump, and, in her endeavour to save her somewhat unwieldy form, her basket slipped from her arms. Shrieks of laughter resounded across the ice, as the poor old woman sat, the very picture of surprised misery, surrounded, and more or less smothered, by broken eggs! Great was the fall of the mighty. She who a moment before had been exultantly joyful was now sitting an egg-besmeared and bespattered mess, while little boys were running off with her pats of butter or wickedly playing ball with them. The good body was in a sorry plight; but, after the first bursts of amusement on the part of the bystanders, they were very kind to the old soul—picked her up, put her on her feet again, and did what they could to restore the shattered fragments to her market basket.

It was certainly a quaint evening's entertainment for us, as well as a cheap one. Beyond paying twopence to have our skates put on, it had cost us nothing. Occasionally we came across parents trundling in front of them box-like perambulators containing little rolled up bundles of humanity; or sometimes we saw a baby, enveloped in a woollen hood, sitting in a common wooden box, attached to a string, and dragged along by a young brother or sister.

Judging by the old Dutch pictures, the ladies in former times used to be rolled over the ice in a sort of armchair sledge by the men, but only once did we see one of these old-world

ARRANGED LIKE ONIONS ON A STICK

sledges in use, and then it was being propelled by a gorgeous man-servant. The lady looked very warm and comfortable in her furs, her knees enveloped in an enormous bearskin rug, and the servant was pushing her along in a most marvellous fashion, keeping her perfectly straight, although one would naturally suppose that the chair would wobble from side to side in unison with his legs. Not so, however; the Dutch know how to push their burden in front of them, and it is wonderful to see the little sledge, laden with milk cans, carcasses of meat, tubs of flour, or the hundred and one things used in commerce, propelled perfectly evenly over miles and miles of frozen waterways, dammed up by those wondrous dykes, many of which were made three hundred years ago. These dykes are peculiar to Holland, for they are merely sand piled up against a well-driven wooden paling over which a rough sort of grass is grown—a kind of bent, in fact, such as one finds by the sea shore in Scotland, which the Highlanders plait into mats and baskets.

Holland is all sand, or the poorest of land; but the Dutch are such thrifty, practical, hard-working people that they have redeemed the sea and dyked it up, and by some wonderful process turned vast districts into fair pasture. So painstaking, indeed, have they been, that towns like Monnikendam and Edam are absolutely built on shifting sand, as is very evident from the leaning appearance of many of the houses. Indeed, whole streets possess rows of houses out of the perpendicular, and props from the ground to the house wall are quite common. To a stranger the sight is alarming, for the angle is sometimes as great as that of the famous tower at Pisa, which makes one giddy to look at; but the Dutch do not mind, and dwell in slanting homes as happily and contentedly as we do in our straight ones.

Iceboat sailing (described by the writer, 'Badminton,' January 1896) and skating are the two amusements which rouse a Dutchman to the greatest enthusiasm, but while money is required for the first, one and all can enjoy the second—and they certainly manage to do so.

There is no doubt about it that a very indifferent skater may have a good time in Holland when the canals are frozen; for once there comes a frost, the ice generally lasts for some weeks, and, provided the east wind is not too strong, Holland may then practically be traversed from end to end on skates.

It is not necessary to be a grand performer on blades, to be able to cut figures or do outside or inside edges, for such things are not required; and, indeed, many persons who

find skating extremely tiring in this country, from the weight and height of the usual English skates, can without fatigue do double and treble the distance on the long, low Dutch blades.

Travelling in Holland is not expensive; in fact, in some of the out-of-the-way places, and especially in Friesland, it is cheap. But there is one drawback to seeing the country by this means: this is that not a single soul outside of the towns can understand anything but Dutch, and the natives do not show great adaptability at jumping at conclusions or comprehending the gesticulations of the unhappy traveller. With a good map much may be done, and, indeed, the entire route planned before leaving the chief hotels. Still it is worth mentioning the fact that some difficulty may be encountered in connection with the language; for several times, even in our small way, we came across instances of dense stupidity on the part of the natives. At least, we thought so—perhaps it was our own dulness and inability to make ourselves understood.

One lad, more enterprising than the rest, replied to some inquiry, 'Oui, Madame,' whereupon we repeated the question in French, when he again answered 'Oui, Madame.' This was so satisfactory that we asked for further information. 'Oui, Madame,' replied the grinning lad. His manner was a little exasperating, but we still persevered. 'Oui, Madame,' he persisted. The little wretch had not understood another word. 'Oui, Madame' was all he knew in any language but his own!

In little out-of-the-way hostelries in the smaller villages there is one great recommendation, and that is their wonderful cleanliness. The Dutch are a nation of washers! They are always scrubbing or cleaning something; and even in quite little inns clean rooms and spotless beds are always to be found, so that many might do worse than pack up their traps, and be off to Holland with the beginning of the frost; for they will probably have a good time, see much that is interesting, and thoroughly enjoy themselves at a small cost.

We had skated miles. It was almost midnight; people were dropping off one by one to their homes, and we felt thoroughly tired, so, leaving the ice, we sought a cab to convey us back to De Boompjes. The horses' ears were enveloped in little bags, for it is a common idea in Holland that they easily become frost-bitten; probably only an idea, as in many colder countries they do not cover up these organs at all, and yet the horses do not lose them, possibly because they have sufficient instinct to move them constantly, and so keep up the circulation. It is quite

true that the cattle in Holland in the winter, if left out of doors, are enveloped in coats! These are generally old sacks or something equally primitive; but there they are, and very remarkable a cow looks, covered up with as much care as an old maid's fat wobbling pug, which nearly suffocates from over-feeding and thickness of clothing on a mild winter's day in England.

Almost every house we passed as we drove home had looking-glasses at the sides of the windows to enable the inhabitants to see who was passing along the street. Does this imply that the Dutch are a very curious people, or that their lives are so dull as to make them herald any little excitement with joy?

The thaw began that night, and a couple of days later the ice was very much cracked and covered with water. Luckily we had no spills, which would have meant a veritable bath.

Day and night the ice of Holland is quite gay with skaters. Everyone seems good-tempered and jolly, and bent on enjoying him or her self; and even the old people skate with the assurance acquired by practice. But a thoroughly graceful skater is a rarity. Style apparently counts for nothing against speed—unless the swinging arm and well-kicked-out leg are considered correct form; but for pace the Netherlanders are certainly marvellous, Dutchmen often holding the championship of the world in this particular line of sport. If they are not graceful skaters, they are very practical, and they take advantage of the ice to pay visits to distant friends, or to convey their goods long journeys. Ice, indeed, is a vast boon to the people of Holland, who are not slow to take advantage of its advent, and make every possible use of it, both for business and pleasure, as long as it lasts.

MR. H. H. HILTON, CHAMPION GOLFER 1897

BY H. S. C. EVERARD

SAYS Archidamus, of the young Sicilian Prince Mamillius: 'It is a gentleman of the greatest promise that ever came into my note,' to which Camillo, cordially assenting, replies to the effect that 'it *is* a gallant child, one that indeed physics the subject, makes old hearts fresh;' with more to the same effect. Well, all these pretty things might aptly enough have been said, they doubtless *were* said, if in more modern language, of Mr. Harold H. Hilton in his boyhood, and never was early promise more completely and satisfactorily fulfilled. In cricket sometimes—as in the cases of Dr. W. G. Grace and Prince Ranjitsinhji—in golf rather more frequently, we have examples of the man of the moment, the gifted individual who for a year seems to be a living contradiction of the Preacher's statement, that 'There is not favour to men of skill, but that time and chance happeneth to all;' doubtless, on rare occasions, the cricketer does retire with the ignominious duck, or something not much better, even as his brother sportsman, the accomplished golfer, has an occasional bad round or two; but what are they among so many that are good, or who regards them save as the mere exceptions proving the rule of all but unbroken success? It would appear as though these individuals, befriended of fortune, 'Kings of Cricket,' to use Daft's phrase, and kings of golf, like their prototype in the adage, could do no wrong; still, lesser mortals might almost be excused for wondering whether it is possible for them to be in a manner cloyed with

success; the man in the street might speculate as to whether his majesty might not like occasionally to abandon his monotonous course of rectitude, falling into line for the nonce with the unrighteous, and, like them, yielding awhile to the blandishments of moral obliquity. Let us hasten to add, for fear of misconstruction, that these reflections are made in no ignoble spirit, but are in the nature of purely philosophical musings on the golfing career of Mr. Hilton, and more especially that portion of it which is comprised within the limits of the year 1897. The most casual reader, if he happened to pay any attention at all to the golfing intelligence of that year, must have been struck by the frequency

ROYAL LIVERPOOL GOLF CLUB HOUSE, HOYLAKE

with which the Open Champion's name appeared at the top of the list in competitions, thus worthily maintaining the honours so hardly and honourably won on his native green. Leaving the championship aside for the moment, we find that in the scoring competitions—of which more presently—he sometimes distanced his opponents altogether; at other times, with players in the field of the calibre of Mr. John Ball, jun., Mr. Charles Hutchings, and the really formidable array of first-class golfers which Hoylake and neighbouring greens can now produce, when one or other of these arrived with some low score of about 79 or 80, it was only to find Mr. Hilton already comfortably ensconced as the

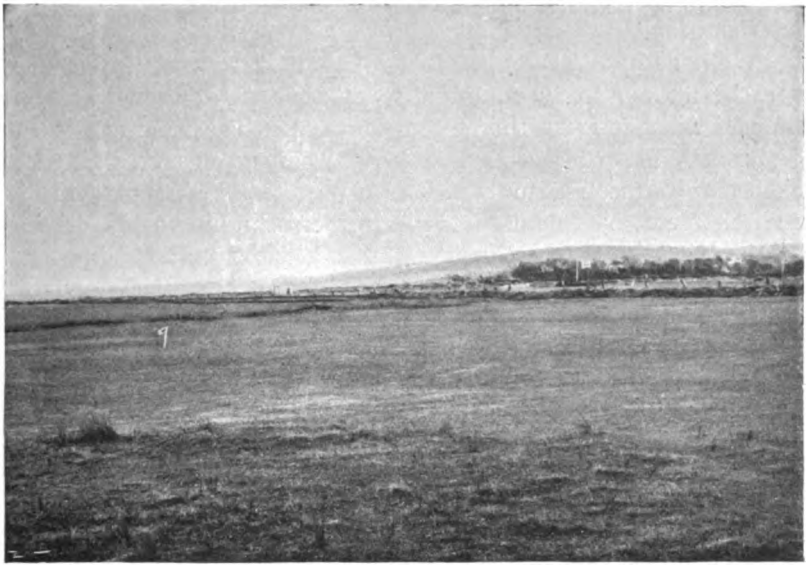
man in possession (or shortly to become so), in virtue of his card totalling just one stroke fewer than theirs; truly, on occasions, the difference between 78 and 79 is not merely in proportion to their numerical value.

Born at West Kirby, close to Hoylake, in 1869, the present champion, in boyhood, was pre-eminent in athletics—cricket, football, fives, swimming, sprinting and hurdle racing; when, therefore, golf came to be added to his repertory of sports, there could be little doubt that, with continual practice at the right age, he would make his mark; probably the *cognoscenti* at Hoylake were not long in discovering his exceeding aptitude, albeit it may well

VIEW FROM ALPS, HOYLAKE

be doubted whether even the most discerning among them would have ventured on any prophecy which would even remotely have forecast Mr. Hilton's actual measure of success already attained. In his 'salad days,' when he was 'green in judgment,' he had the inestimable advantage of continually seeing golf of the very best; for his compatriot, Mr. John Ball, jun., was, and indeed still is, a star of the very first magnitude, whose brilliance may be said to have culminated in 1890, when he won both the Amateur and Open Championships, being the first amateur who had ever lowered the colours of the whole field of professionals. Oddly enough, however, Mr. Hilton's own methods of play by no means suggest an imitation of Mr. Ball. It would be going too far to

say that they have nothing whatever in common, for every good player to some extent, and on certain broad lines, resembles other good players; but since there is room for considerable individuality, it may be remarked that no two players present a greater contrast, no two are more dissimilar in what one would have thought some rather important points. Thus, Mr. Hilton, at the all-important short approach, manipulates the mashy with the fingers of the right hand. Mr. Ball sinks the club in the palm, and he too does deadly execution with the cleek, a club which the present champion rarely or never touches, trusting, in lieu thereof, to a short brassey, certain strokes with which he may be said almost



LONG HOLE, HOYLAKE

to have invented; certainly no man is better qualified to write a treatise on 'The Brassey, and How to Use It,' for over and above his deadly execution with it, Mr. Hilton is able with facile pen to set forth the reasons for the faith that is in him. And truth to tell, a very excellent judge of the game he is; he has thought matters out for himself, invariably his criticisms and remarks are apposite and worthy of attention; and it seems to the present writer far from unlikely that Mr. Hilton's present game is due not to practice alone, but to practice supplemented by very effectual meditation in the silent watches of the night, that, in short, his considering-cap, like the *Tarn-Kappe* in the *Nibelungen-Lied*, which endowed the wearer with the strength of twelve men, has

had no small share in raising the champion to a position above his fellows. One eminently satisfactory result of his cogitations is apparent—painfully apparent—to his antagonists, namely, that by general consent he is now driving a much longer ball than ever before; this fact was quaintly put to the present writer in words which, in their topsy-turvy trenchancy, recall the famous sentence enunciated of old by Mr. Sutherland, 'And we would have lost the match if Blackwood hadn't by the d——dest providence holed his putt,' even so, *haud aliter*, Mr. Charles Hutchings *loq.*: 'I've played many rounds against him this year, and been sometimes at the top of my game, and yet the best I could do was to lose by two and one to play; his driving now is just *too sickening*.'

Well, many of us know Mr. Hutchings 'at the top of his game' (and he, too, by the same token, is playing better than ever, himself will admit it), therefore his evidence is that of a witness of credit, one who well knows whereof he speaks. But the champion himself also confesses to a longer ball; asked to account for it, he tells us that it is principally due to his driving off the left leg, and to the use of flat-faced clubs; for formerly his clubs were all very much 'grassed'—in fact, he is now using a 'driver' for the first time for five years. Up to the age of twenty-two, he used to drive, as at present, from the left foot; then he gradually altered his method, until he arrived at a position, similar to that of Mr. Tait and Mr. Ball, standing open; but, as we have seen, he has now abandoned this style, save and except where straightness is of cardinal importance. Now, this quality of accuracy is one wherein English-bred golfers do for the most part far excel their Scottish brethren, or, at any rate, such of them as have learnt or are learning at St. Andrews. Nobody nowadays on the classic links cares a rush for, or gives a thought to, the direction of his tee shot; all he does is to drive vaguely into space; but the one *sine quâ non* is distance, and very often—may one say generally?—the further off the line the man is the better, provided always that he has hit his ball a long way. He will then be in a field (which ought to be out of bounds) or on the new course, or on the ladies' links, or in a district where there ought to be whins though none remain; but wherever he is, one thing is tolerably certain, that he will find his ball nicely teed if he is off the course. Meanwhile the other, driven straight on the line, is in a 'skelp mark' behind a steep bluff, where a stroke is wasted and the hole probably lost. St. Andrews Links, having been at one time far too narrow, have now reached the other

extreme, and become a thousand times too broad; consequently, unless or until some golden mean be attained, whether by out of bounds lines, or other device whereby accuracy may obtain some meed of recognition, just so long will St. Andrew's sons be at a grave disadvantage when pitted against leading English players,

MR. HILTON PLAYING A 'BRASSEY' SHOT

such as Mr. Hilton and J. H. Taylor, who study precision of driving and bring it to perfection as one of the fine arts. Again and again, during recent championships, has the same thing been observed; in fact, at Muirfield, where the grass at the sides has grown long and rank, it has been almost comical to witness the discomfiture of some of the 'slashers,' when a very moderate

'pull' or 'slice' had landed them outside the limits of the straight, but not too narrow way, necessitating the use of the niblick to regain the course. But this, perhaps, is a digression; we have played the wrong ball, so to speak—the right one at this particular hole being a consideration of Mr. Hilton's past and present mode of play. It should be said, with reference to the extra length of his driving, that in 1894 he had the misfortune to break one of the ligaments of his wrist, after which, for some time of course, he was unable to play at all, and when he did begin anew, his swing had of necessity to be considerably shortened, until it had become, as he expresses it, 'a sort of exaggerated three-quarter swing,' and not until the beginning of 1897 had he sufficient confidence in the strength of his injured wrist to 'let himself go,' and give it free play. But, once started, he certainly made up for lost time, and, with a longer swing than ever, his driving has become more powerful than it was even before he met with his disabling accident. His approaching has always been done—at least for seven years, it has been done—with Forrester's clubs; we all know—those of us who play—the pleasing confidence with which we call for our 'ordinary iron,' our 'straight-faced mashy,' or whatever the tool may be that has long served us faithfully in stress of battle, so little more need be said about that branch of the champion's game, which has always been and still is characterised by undeniable precision. When we come to the all-important short game, we find that here, too, he has recently altered his style, approximating it more to that of Mr. Horace Hutchinson, the chosen apostle of the pendulum style of putting. Using a metal club, chiefly Park's patent, but sometimes also that of Taylor, Mr. Hilton stands with the ball midway between his feet, is careful to see that the putter face is straight, and then, with as much of the aforesaid pendulum swing as possible, proceeds to hole out from all distances with a regularity as monotonous as it is disconcerting to his adversary.

Fully to particularise Mr. Hilton's successes, or even a tenth part of them from the time, about 1890, when he first came prominently into notice, would demand more space than the most indulgent editor could allow. We may therefore content ourselves with a more or less cursory glance at the remoter past, and look a little more closely at the performances of 1897, when he was, as he still is, emphatically the man of the moment. Up to the present time Mr. Hilton's fortune in the Amateur Championship has been—not so much disappointing, since that epithet might constructively imply a certain inferiority of play—as

tantalising. When, for instance, a man ties in the final, as did Mr. Hilton in 1891, obviously that is a case where Jack is about as good as his master; such a very little would have turned the scale, and the result had been wholly different. But that, of course, is of the essence of golf, compact as the game is of skill and chance in, for the most part, delightful proportions. Still one cannot but regard Dame Fortune with a somewhat oblique glance, nor altogether restrain a feeling of sympathy for one with whom she has dealt rather hardly in this particular competition. So near, and yet so far; just the one stone lacking artistically to complete the edifice. It may be remembered, however, that

SEVENTEENTH HOLE, HOYLAKE

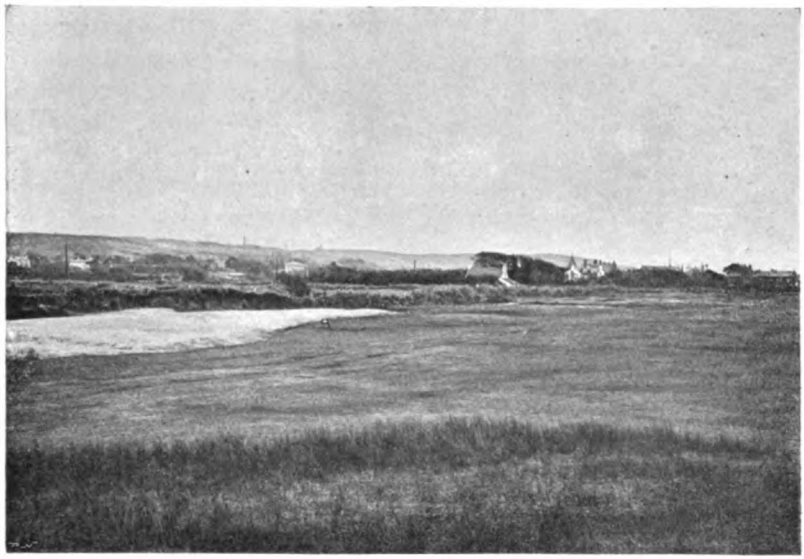
in the early days of this annual competition Mr. Ball himself began in by no means too promising a manner; and yet he would have been a bold man who would have affirmed that at that period the loser was one whit inferior to the winner. It is true that Mr. Ball, when once he did get under weigh, more than made up for his inauspicious start, and it may be—it surely must be—that for his compatriot there is also a good time coming; nevertheless it is useless to blink the fact that year by year the laurels and bays are more difficult to win; that the cypress and yews of shattered hopes are ready to hand in often unexpected and luxurious profusion.

Somebody wielding the pen of the ready writer may perchance

hit upon the 'Surprises of Golf' as a text upon which to discourse; if that be so, assuredly the Amateur Championship of 1897 will occur to him as affording abundant and admirable illustrations of his remarks. From first to last the unexpected triumphantly justified the adage; but we are concerned to mention no details not applicable to the subject of our sketch. Mr. Hilton's overthrow was less surprising than that of some of the other giants; his conqueror, to be sure, Mr. R. Maxwell, had not been known to fame beyond the precincts of North Berwick and neighbouring greens, and if, before the tournament began, any discussion had arisen as to the comparative merits of the two golfers, nine people out of ten would have given their vote in favour of the Hoylake player on the strength of his well-established reputation. But when once the tournament at Muirfield began, it became apparent that in Mr. Maxwell anyone, however good, would find a very tough customer indeed. So much was obvious in the second round, when the Tantallon player disposed of no less a celebrity than Mr. John Ball, jun., himself. Not without a struggle—aye, and what a struggle! for they who were there in very deed report that this match alone would have rendered memorable the Muirfield gathering. Never was there a more Homeric duel, a more brilliant presentment of sterling golf played at high pressure, and the match ended in a tie, to be decided only at the fifth succeeding hole in favour of the young lad who thus so honourably won his spurs. This, then, was the manner of man whom Mr. Hilton was now destined to encounter in the fourth round; the powers of the Scotsman had been put to the touchstone of proof, and by this time, if not previously, were well enough known.

Over the issue of this disastrous encounter we draw a diaphanous veil, merely stating, in as honeyed words as the facts admit of, that Mr. Hilton was smitten hip and thigh, beaten by six holes, and had not a ghost of a chance from start to finish; if, indeed, we except the first hole, which was won by him, a solitary advantage, which disappeared anon with startling celerity. The stars in their courses fought against him on that day, for he was a severe sufferer from stimies, three of which, in the course of the first eight holes, robbed him of what chance he might have had; nevertheless, astronomical influences are powerless to account for the obvious fact, rare enough indeed with him, that his play on this occasion was not commensurate with his reputation. In the earlier years of the tournament, from 1889 to 1892, both inclusive, he was on the whole more fortunate, being beaten only by the ultimate winners, Messrs. J. E. Laidlay and John

Ball, jun.; in 1891 he reached the final, which resulted in a tie, decided only at the 20th hole in Mr. Laidlay's favour, while, in 1892, he was again in the final, but was beaten by Mr. Ball, by three and one to play. By this time Mr. F. G. Tait had come nearly to his full powers, and it needed but little skill in prophecy to foretell that he would before long range himself alongside the great masters who for the most part had monopolised the principal honours. Accordingly, in three years out of the next four, Mr. Hilton had to succumb to Scotland's new representative, the last of these defeats, in 1896, being at Sandwich, where, in the final, remarkable for unparalleled brilliancy on the part of Mr. Tait



DOWIE HOLE, HOYLAKE

(one of whose rounds was a record of 76), Mr. Hilton in thirty-six holes was defeated by 8 and 7 to play. Thus, for the last two years, his experiences have been somewhat unfortunate. It is, however, when we turn to his performances where scoring rounds are in question that we find him almost invariably at his best. Why some men should be so conspicuously good in this branch of the game—whether it is a matter of temperament, a comfortable Kismet-feeling that your score is sure to be good, seems hard to determine; it is a much commoner inspiration to hold, and generally correctly, that whate'er betide, your score is sure to be incurably bad; but, to abandon speculation, it is an unquestioned fact that Mr. Hilton stands out as perhaps the best scorer in

Great Britain. Give him a card and pencil and he is happy, for, even as certain savage tribes have difficulty in dealing with numbers over five, so might we imagine Mr. Hilton practically unacquainted with numerals exceeding eighty, having of them such a limited and infrequent experience. Thus his comparative disappointments in match play have been more than mitigated by his extraordinarily numerous victories in medal rounds; one of the earliest, as well as the most important of these being, of course, his success at Muirfield in 1892, when, with 305, which included a 72, he won the Open Championship by three strokes, his nearest opponents being Sandy Herd, Mr. John Ball, and the late Hugh Kirkaldy, who had all tied at 308. An eloquent testimony as to his nerve is to be found in the fact that he was well aware what was required of him, that his allowance for the last round was the somewhat scanty one of 76 to win, and that he finished in 74. Other performances of course pale before this crowning achievement, but incidental reference may be made to 71 and 69 at Formby; 72 at Hall Road and at Birkdale; 74 at Chester, at Bushey, and at Disley. In 1893, in twenty-five competitions at Formby, his score never exceeded 82, and his average worked out to about 78. In 1895, to take a few of his performances, he won the medal on the second day of the Spring Meeting at Hoylake, after a tie with Mr. H. A. Farrar at 82; a 79 at Formby was followed by an aggregate of 159 at Lytham and St. Anne's, where his second round was 77; Mr. John Ball, jun. was second, with 164. But one of his most brilliant exploits was at Hoylake in the autumn of 1896; for the attendant conditions of most execrable weather were such as to preclude any possibility, as one might have supposed, of a low return. Nevertheless, Mr. Horace Hutchinson first of all upset calculations with an admirable 80, good enough, of course, under any circumstances, but justly enough regarded on that particular day as entitling him, without further question, to the honours of premier position. But, like Hudibras, who

> thought he'd won
> The field as certain as a gun,
> And having routed the whole troop
> With victory was cock-a-hoop;

he was doomed to disappointment and comparative, if honourable, eclipse—

> Found in few minutes to his cost
> He did but count without his host

in the person of Mr. Hilton, who, playing in the very worst of the weather, with 77 (38 out and 39 home), took the medal record of the links, which had been held by Mr. John Ball, jun., for eleven years. It is necessary, however, to state, in justice to that gentleman, that he allowed but little time to elapse before he regained his lost record; for two days afterwards, in half a gale of wind, 'so stormy that no one ever for a moment thought that Mr. Hilton's score of Wednesday could be approached,' 'he found himself in the wonderful position of having a putt for 75,' and actually holed out in 76. The Hoylake Dioscuri in their time have accomplished divers remarkable feats, but among them all this stands

PLAYING TO 'THE COP,' HOYLAKE

out as pre-eminently worthy of special note, and Mr. Hutchinson, who was again second, this time with 86, remarked, like Mr. Bob Sawyer 'in a style of eastern allegory on a subsequent occasion,' that they were 'altogether too sultry' for *him*.

A few scores such as 81 and 78 at Lytham, 76 West Lancashire, 82 at Hoylake, in November 1896—mere unconsidered trifles—representing, however, first prizes, may be thrown in as preludes to the year of his grand climacteric, 1897, now to be discussed. His first competition, then, was at Hoylake in April, where seven players met in an American tournament, a handicap in which Mr. John Ball, jun., and himself were at scratch. Mr.

John Graham, jun., was in receipt of two holes up, Messrs. E. Spencer and H. A. Farrar each had three, Mr. W. C. Glover four, and Mr. G. R. Cox five. Mr. Hilton won all his six heats in succession. Next came a club match at North Berwick, the Royal Liverpool golf club against Tantallon, and here again Mr. Hilton played well, defeating Mr. W. B. Taylor by seven holes. But, once arrived at Muirfield, his confidence somehow or other began to wane, and, as we have seen, he sustained a severe defeat. This reverse, however, did not seem materially to affect him, for a week later, with his foot once more on his native green, we find him winning the medal with 78, in a strong wind, the nearest to him

ALPS HOLE, HOYLAKE

being Mr. Hutchings, with 84, and Mr. John Ball, jun., as it were in the middle distance, with 90. But, as so often happens at Hoylake, a defeat on the first day seems to stimulate the last-named gentleman to greater effort on the second, his motto would appear to be, *reculer pour mieux sauter*, and it was so in this instance. On the second day, accordingly, he was in the place of honour with 77, and Messrs. Hilton, Laidlay, and John Graham, jun., all tied for second at 79. On playing off, the scores were Mr. Hilton 81, Mr. Graham 83, Mr. Laidlay 89. From these successes Mr. Hilton took heart of grace, and awaited the 19th and 20th of May, the days of the Open Championship, with comparative equani-

mity. His first round in that competition was 80—good, of course, but not exceptionally so—and it was beaten by four players, of whom Alexander Herd and Mr. John Ball, jun., were best with 78. But at the second time of asking Mr. Hilton did himself the fullest justice, and a brilliant 75 gave a total for the first day of 155, which, low though it was, was bettered by one player, J. Braid, who in his second round had the extraordinarily good score of 74. In the third round Mr. Hilton's tactics were somewhat at fault; playing too cautious a game, he was continually short in approaches and putts, and, in brief, jeopardised his chances with the (for him) bad round of 84. He now took fifth place with 239 for the three rounds, Braid being first with 236, followed by Mr. F. G. Tait, Sandy Herd, and G. Pulford, with 238 each. Thus the situation was extremely interesting, as indeed it always is on these occasions; it became still more so when Mr. Hilton duplicated his 75, and finished his four rounds in 314. His most dangerous opponent, as it turned out, was Braid, who was left with 18 for the last four holes to win, but a 6 at the third last hole was unfortunate for him, and though he made a gallant bid for a 3 at the 18th hole, his actual total was 315, and Mr. Hilton, by one stroke only, won his second championship. The details of his two best rounds were

$$\left.\begin{array}{rl} \text{Second round, out:} & 4\ 4\ 5\ 2\ 5\ 4\ 4\ 5\ 4 = 37 \\ \text{home:} & 4\ 3\ 5\ 3\ 5\ 4\ 6\ 4\ 4 = 38 \end{array}\right\} = 75$$

$$\left.\begin{array}{rl} \text{Fourth round, out:} & 3\ 4\ 5\ 2\ 4\ 5\ 5\ 5\ 5 = 38 \\ \text{home:} & 4\ 3\ 4\ 3\ 5\ 4\ 5\ 5\ 4 = 37 \end{array}\right\} = 75$$

Braid's second round, the lowest of the meeting, reads thus,

$$\left.\begin{array}{rl} \text{out:} & 4\ 4\ 5\ 4\ 3\ 4\ 3\ 5\ 4 = 36 \\ \text{home:} & 5\ 3\ 4\ 3\ 5\ 5\ 5\ 4\ 4 = 38 \end{array}\right\} = 74$$

That Mr. Hilton's knowledge of the course was an advantage to him cannot of course be gainsaid; indeed, he himself modestly gave Braid the credit of chief honours, suggesting a moral if not material victory for him, as having so well acquitted himself on a strange course. But, when all is said, Mr. Hilton's performance remains an eloquent testimony as to his own prowess, and, besides, it may be noted that the links on which he won his first championship were strange to him also. On the two days succeeding the championship he won both medals at Formby with 81 and 79; and later, at Hoylake, won the Jubilee Commemoration tournament, defeating, in the semi-final, Mr. John Graham, jun., who received 2 holes up. This gentleman had previously

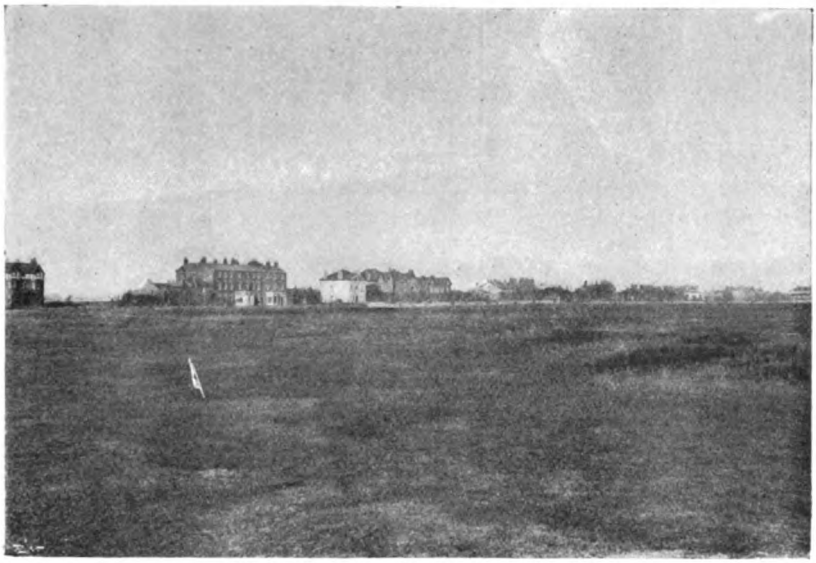
beaten Mr. John Ball, jun., by 9 up and 7 to play, but Mr. Hilton, going out in 36 against the wind, won by 4 and 3 to play; then meeting Mr. Holden in the final, and giving 4 holes, he halved the first round, but won the second by 3 and 2. After victories at Carnarvon and Castleton, we find him winning first handicap prize at Lytham and St. Anne's with 79+75+14=168, the next competitor being 7 strokes behind. And on the same green Mr. Hilton was first at the Summer Meeting with 77 and 84=161; with 84, at Hoylake in August, he also won the Lubbock medal. Next came the Irish championship at Dollymount, where, in the words of a contemporary, Mr. Hilton 'dominated the meeting;' he won almost all his matches with ease, and in the final (in which his first round was 76) he defeated Mr. L. Stuart Anderson by 6 and 4 to play in the 36 holes. Subsequently, in a tournament open to amateurs and professionals, in a strong field, he was 80 and 76 = 156, three strokes behind the winner. A 78 at Hall Road, and 82 at Formby, both winning scores, served as a prelude to more victories at Hoylake, where he won on both days with 80 and 81; this time, however, the margin was somewhat narrow, one stroke each day, for Mr. John Ball, jun., and Mr. C. E. Dick each scored 81 on the Wednesday, and the last-named on the Friday returned 82. At Hall Road the champion then accomplished what he considers the best handicap task he ever took in hand in his life. After qualifying with 76+9=85 for a jubilee prize, in which the four lowest net scores became eligible to play off under match play, Mr. Hilton won his first round at the 19th hole. His second was against a Musselburgh player, Mr. H. J. Chisholm, handicapped at scratch, but receiving nine strokes from the champion; the first round was halved, but Mr. Hilton, although 4 down and

MR. HILTON AT THE RUSHES TEE

6 to play, won the second by one hole. His rounds were 77 and 76. This was certainly a wonderful performance, and it may be further stated that in his qualifying round the last nine holes were done in 34 (seven fours and two threes), the whole establishing a record for the extended course. About a month later, however, he lowered this record to 75.

$$\left.\begin{array}{r}\text{out: } 5\,4\,5\,4\,5\,5\,4\,5\,4 = 41\\ \text{home: } 4\,4\,4\,4\,4\,3\,3\,4\,4 = 34\end{array}\right\} = 75$$

winning the medal at the St. Andrews meeting; and if any further evidence were wanting as to what these figures imply, it



LAKE HOLE, HOYLAKE

may be found in the fact that Sandy Herd and J. H. Taylor, favoured by perfect weather in May 1897, scored 79, 78, and 81, 78 respectively. The above is not an exhaustive list of the champion's successes in 1897, but may be taken as a fair sample of his average play. At this moment of writing (December) he has not been beaten by any amateur at Hoylake in the course of the year, and his total there for eleven rounds in competitions is 872, averaging just over 79, best round 75, worst round 84. At Hall Road he has had 78, 76, 75; and at Formby 81, 79, 76, 82, 79. These figures go far to bear out the statement that as a scorer he is almost unrivalled. One or two rather amusing

remarks were made about him by enthusiastic Irishmen at Dollymount: (1) 'I should like to see the little beggar in a bunker, just for a change;' (2) 'Begorra there isn't much of him in his clothes;' and (3) 'What a fine boxer he would have made,' as if he had mistaken his vocation; and of a truth he is of a type admired by Saxon and Celt alike, such of them, at least, as are properly imbued with the British love of sport, and healthy admiration for those who therein excel.[1]

[1] When this was written, the report of the R.L.G.C. Hoylake meeting on St. Andrew's Day was not to hand. On a shortened course Mr. John Ball, junr., Mr. Hilton, and Mr. H. Holden tied at 79; on playing off Mr. Ball won with a fine score of 74 Mr. Hilton 78, and Mr. Holden 87.

WOMAN DISPOSES

BY ROSALIND CHAMBERS

RAWDON MAINE regarded the year of grace 1897 as unlucky. Everything seemed to have gone wrong. First the hay was not well saved, then he had a very bad attack of influenza, next he was in love with the wrong woman. She was certainly not the first, but never before had he and his nephew fixed on the same one. That was where the trouble lay, and, moreover, the two lived together. Yet even worse was in store. He had begun to fear it in the cubbing season, but he always thought he would be all right when the horses were in condition. Now they were thoroughly hard; and yet—it was that beastly influenza. Not even to himself would he own that he funked, and he set his teeth vowing that Miss Brand should never find it out. Naturally she was the first to notice it.

'Poor old dear!' she said (he was only fifty), 'he's getting a wonderful eye for a gate, but I don't know his equal even now for being on the right side in a wood.'

Then the heiress laughed her hard laugh and looked round for approbation, with her little nose in the air. She lifted her leg over the pommel, leaning her elbow on her knee; she considered herself the hardest rider in the hunt, and, as such, felt

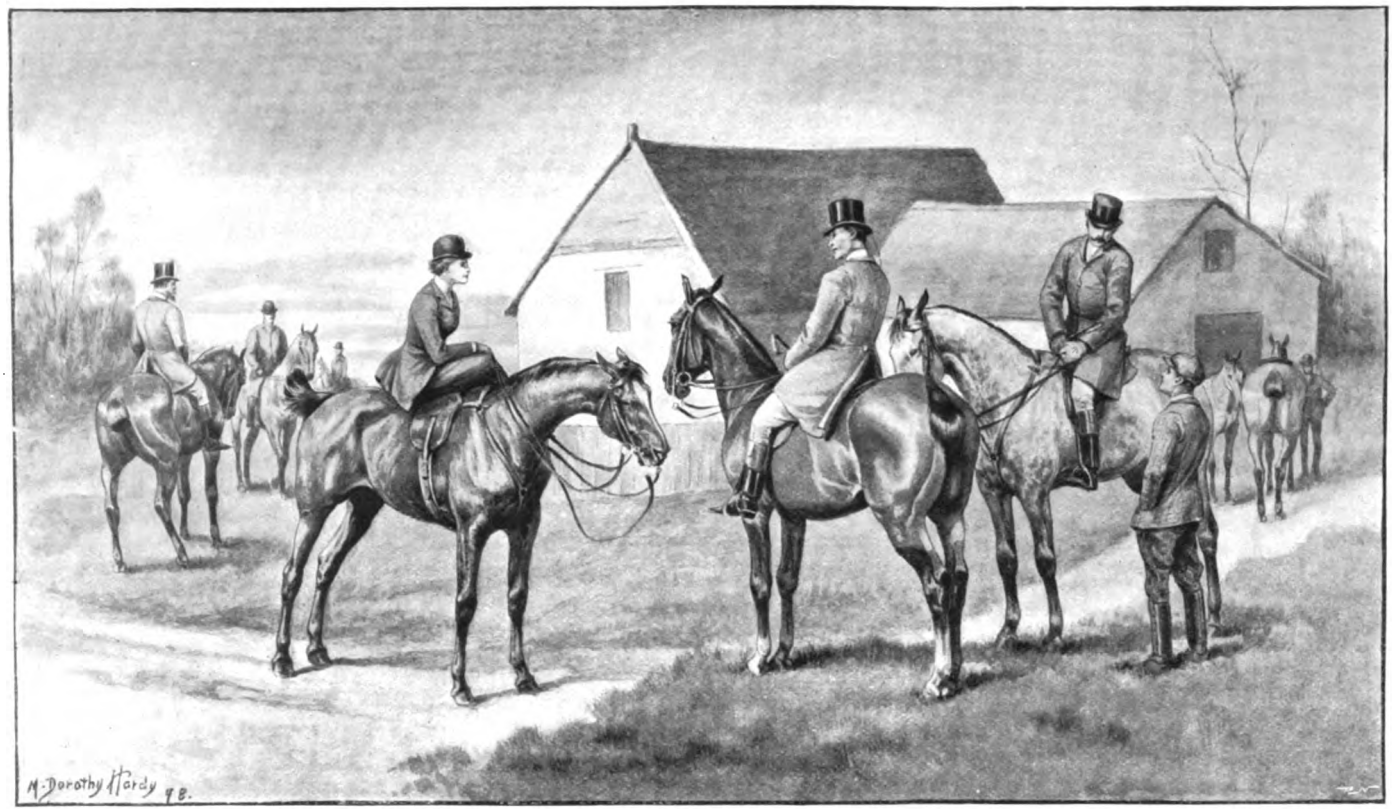
entitled to swagger as much as she pleased. Not that she ever took a line of her own, but she knew whom to follow and how to do it. Flagg, the huntsman, said she 'rode like a married lady, always arter some gentleman.' Young Jack Maine was only too pleased to be that one, and having come in for a good share of it this winter was proportionately puffed up. He was continually dilating upon how well she rode and what a neat figure she had; such a complexion; such eyes, and so on, his face lighting up with enthusiasm and a broad smile all over him. Being exceedingly unobservant he never noticed why his uncle became short when he talked about her, and only thought he was bored.

'Uncle Rawdon can't expect us all to be old bachelors,' the boy of twenty murmured.

'The silly young fool imagines he's a man,' growled the elder to himself. He was very fond of the lad, but everyone is jealous of his heir, and it only needs a woman in the question to make the matter evident. This was by no means Rawdon Maine's first love; on the contrary, he had had quite a varied assortment. They lent a pleasant colouring to his life, gave a little excitement when there was nothing else going on, and died slow comfortable deaths when he wearied of them. They were nearly as necessary to him as a good dinner and almost as regular. His attachment to Miss Brand was of this description, and would have remained so if he had not discovered that the boy meant business. To be cut out by his own nephew was ridiculous, and he immediately imagined this to be the affair of his life. For some time his mind dwelt constantly upon her, while he fanned the flame in secret; but even then it might have drifted away like the others if the climax had not been hastened by Jack's coming home from a bazaar with a dainty lady's footstool. He put it in front of a spare armchair and sat watching it all the evening from behind his pipe with a seraphic smile on his face. This lashed Rawdon up to white heat, and when he could bear it no longer he went to bed and yearned for the morrow. He would ride that day if he never rode again, he vowed to himself, and he meant it.

The boy kissed the footstool and slept a dreamless sleep.

Next morning saw the two riding silently to covert together. Jack on a young one, as cheerful as ever, looking round at intervals and wondering whether Miss Brand were ahead or behind. Rawdon only grunted when spoken to, and the boy concluded his uncle's liver was out of order. A shaking up



'POOR OLD DEAR ! HE'S GETTING A WONDERFUL EYE FOR A GATE

would do him all the good in the world, and he hoped they would get it. There seemed little chance of it at first, for the gorse did not hold a fox, and a jog down a stiff clay lane to a covert only ended in another blank. Then they pounded along the muddy road to Bragg's Sticks, but the foxes all seemed to have left the country. It was past two before they came to

'I AM SO GLAD TO FIND YOU; I FOLLOWED YOU UP'

Straggleton Wood. Here Rawdon went off by himself, for he knew better than to drag up and down the heavy rides like the younger men. Having no idea of Miss Brand's opinion of him he was decidedly pleased when she came up to his corner.

'I am so glad to find you; I followed you up,' she said,

smiling at him. 'You're sure you don't mind my having tracked you out?'

'Only too pleased; always delighted when you are near me.'

'Thank you, that is very nice of you. Do you know I do think we get on very well together, don't you?'

'I hope so. It would hurt me very much if I thought you did not like me.'

'Have I ever seemed not to?'

'Not exactly, and yet I would give a great deal to know how you really think of me.'

'You always seem to understand me so well. Sometimes, Mr. Maine, you quite frighten me; you know just what I am thinking about before I even open my lips. Am I so very simple, or are you so frightfully clever?'

'Neither, it's only because——'

'I'm sure it's that,' she interrupted; 'for other people don't read me as you do.'

'Perhaps I watch and think about you more.'

'There's something I should so like to ask you; may I? You are sure you won't mind?'

'Anything you like—I am entirely yours.'

'Tally-ho!' shouted a man on foot, suddenly, as a fox crept out.

'Hold your ugly noise!' exclaimed Rawdon, turning upon him. 'Do you want to blow the wood down?'

The fox, who had paused at the first shout, now shrank back among the trees, and the group at the corner became silent as the oaks. The conversation was completely ruined. Rawdon longed to know what she had been going to ask him, but they had run off the line, and he did not know how to work back again.

'This certainly is a horrid wood,' remarked the heiress. 'With the great wall round it, if you are outside you don't know how to get in.'

'While if you are inside, like the churchyard, you can't get out.'

'I shall trust to you entirely to-day.'

'Then I hope I mayn't mislead you.'

'I am sure you won't,' she said, smiling sweetly at him.

'I wouldn't for worlds,' he answered, laying his hand on the mane of her horse.

But a covert-side is a poor place for making love, and a view-holloa from the other end of the wood set them galloping. They arrived about the same time as the crowd, his superior wood-craft

having been useless. The fence in front was a large one, but there was an open gate at the corner, and Rawdon made for it with most of the field, down a long plough with gaps into another plough, and an old rotten fence with a shallow stream in front on to some turnips. Never had the land been so heavy in Rawdon's memory, and the horses laboured on up to their hocks in mud. They were blown when they came to their fences, and he felt his confidence oozing out. He swerved for some rails where the top one was gone, and went out of his way again for a gate. He was quite glad when they came to the little jump on to the grass, and then reached a small strip of wood. There was a slight check, opinions varying which way to go, when hounds dashed out on the opposite side. Rawdon hesitated. Along the ride across the covert or down the steep field on the outside? The latter was best if the fox was making for Utley gorse, but if, as was most likely, he was a nasty ringing beggar, he would be back to the left to Straggleton. Jack cantered past him through the gate into the copse, and Rawdon followed, though he was still doubtful. Straight on they went, and those on the ridge could see the horses below galloping at their ease on the grass; they were all right at present, but if hounds swung back they would be thoroughly out of it.

'Dash it all!' he exclaimed involuntarily, as the pack bent towards them. Not so bad though, they were turning again; Cotgrave for a sovereign! He bustled along a cart-track with a fine view of the streaming pack. Now he felt he was going as well as any of them, and Jack was only just in front; he did not know where Miss Brand was. Then as hounds veered once more the wrong way, Jack hopped over a small hedge into a field and made straight for them. Again Rawdon hesitated. The next fence was a stiff one with a take-off down hill and a drop on the far side. He stuck to the track. From this he turned down a steep lane, and the old horse slowed off to a trot on the hard ground. Rawdon caught him tight by the head and shoved him along. It did not serve him far, and he slipped through a gap and hurried up the seeds beyond. The land was very heavy, and he was a long way behind. Another gap, this time into wheat. The people in front of him, stopped by a wire, came back, but they were all before him at the gate. Down a steep field with another gate into the road. Again he seized the old horse by the head and spurred him. Some keen ones turned on to the land again almost at once, but he stayed where he was and bustled along. Thank Heavens, he was right, for the fox had crossed, and was away towards Broomhill.

Jack in the meantime was well up. The drop landed him into a big grass meadow, where he and the huntsman raced for the gate at the corner, the brook with its rotten banks being seldom jumpable, and to-day quite impassable. They swung it wide on its hinges, crossed the stream by the bridge, popping over a hedge into a fallow where a path gave them a firm foothold, and landed them at the top of the hill a good deal fresher than they otherwise would have been. Away along the top, the pack increasing their pace as they went. Down a couple of grass fields with a post and rails before a ditch, but not a man remained behind, and they rammed along up the plough, the furrows favouring them. Still it told on the horses, who were now beginning to labour a little, though they toiled on gallantly. Some broken down rails with many gaps let them easily on to the seeds, but the fence beyond pulled them all up for a moment. 'Ware wire!' shouted those in front, turning aside and popping into the fields on either side. Flagg's horse refusing at the first time of asking left Jack and Major Wright leading the van on the west. Miss Brand, who was one of a quartet who had nicked in a little before, stuck to them, and began to ride cunning exactly behind them. Some sheep netting stopped them, and gave the huntsman time to slip up, calling out that the whole of this farm was wired. A gate here and there gave the horses some respite until they got on to a better man's land, and could shoot on again. Here the fox having been bothered and turned twice away from his point, doubled down a hedgerow and brought hounds to their noses.

'Forrard on!' shouted Flagg; 'forrard on, forrard on!' but almost before they got up to them they were away at best pace again. Another footpath across a plough helped the horses, and they galloped along it one behind another, over the little wooden stiles, until they came on to a cross road. Here they checked again, and most of the roadsters hurried up as if they had been with hounds all the time. A gate out, with another into the field beyond, tempted most to follow, and the pace not being so good, they bumped along like a regiment.

Rawdon was amongst them. He was irritable, angry with himself for having ridden badly, and still more with Jack for coming up in the front with Miss Brand behind him. Thrusting his hat on his head he resolved to cut him down at all hazards. He wished heartily for big places, but was still relieved to find them small. They skirted a wood with convenient hand-gates, and of course all the rabble came too. Another gate at one side

drew many of them off, and the pack swinging slightly the other way favoured those who had stuck to the line. The pace improved steadily, and the van began to be weeded out, though no jump had come where anyone could distinguish himself. The

RAWDON CLENCHED HIS TEETH AND FOLLOWED

fields between were small and the fences so close together that you hardly seemed over one before you were on to the next. Rawdon's old horse threw himself over them easily, not doing more than necessary, but still clearing them, while Jack's four-year-old took to chancing them in a way that showed how

beat he was. However, his blood told, and he never thought of turning.

Gradually the country became wilder, with more ditches and less drainage, large grass fields with plenty of gaps in the tall overgrown hedges being the rule. Some mole-hills brought one man to grief, and several hind legs dropped short on landing. Rawdon looked round with satisfaction; he was one of the first five, and there were not a score behind him. Though it was the pace and not the jumping that had left them, he still felt elated, thereby recovering his temper and wits. They were now on the limestone, where scent was seldom good; but the wet held it to-day. A stone wall with a stiff coping rose before them. Those who had ridden the first part of the run felt their horses hardly in condition for it, Flagg being the only one who had been lucky enough to pick up his fresh one at the check. Jack turned across a quickset at the side, and then rode along as straight as ever. The huntsman topped the wall, leaving it just as he found it. Rawdon clenched his teeth and followed (not even then could he have led), having the satisfaction of noting that not another soul had it. He wondered whether Miss Brand had seen him? Not a bit too soon for horses did hounds begin to dwell, spreading and feathering. The trot became a walk. Presently hounds stood still, with their heads in the air, while a few more people straggled up. At last Flagg, obliged to cast the pack, hit it off, going merrily for a field or two, when they slowed down once more. This time there was a longer check and he made a wider cast, but it was evidently no good, they could not get on the line again.

'Very sorry, gentlemen,' said the huntsman at length; after trying all round, 'but I'm afraid it's no use; never is any scent on these meadows. Sorry to leave a fox out of our own country, but I dessay he'll be back home before we want him again. Too late to try anywhere else to-night, don't you think so, sir?' he inquired of Major Wright.

Everyone began to think of his nearest road, waiting to talk the run over till that was settled. Rawdon went up to Miss Brand, remarking that they were both going the same way, and opened the gate for her. Several people passed, but he paid no attention to them, being still very pleased with himself, and determined to put it to the touch now or never. Miss Brand, who regarded him as elderly, never guessed what was coming. When she realised, she laughed her usual hard laugh.

'Marry you, Mr. Maine? Oh, no, indeed, I couldn't. I like you very much as a friend, and as a friend of my father's, but I

'MARRY YOU, MR. MAINE? OH, NO, INDEED, I COULDN'T'

really couldn't think of anything else. No, let's always remain friends,' she said heartlessly as she held out her hand to him.

He pretended not to see it at first, but was obliged to in the end, though he was bitterly hurt. To be regarded in the same light as her father instead of a lover wounded his vanity, her flippancy disgusted him; moreover, she avowedly preferred younger men. He ground his teeth and looked at Jack's long back with jealous eyes. To be an old fogey was bad enough, but that she should have laughed at him! Meantime he said never a word.

'Capital run, wasn't it?' began Miss Brand's high voice. 'Where were you at the beginning?'

If Rawdon had been in a right frame of mind he would have known that this was merely a way of changing the subject, but in his green-eyed state he regarded it as another insult. He had never been nearly as much in love as he had imagined himself to be, and now he began to hate her.

'I have no doubt you were close enough up,' he replied stiffly.

'Did you see?' inquired Miss Brand, whose guilty conscience smote her. 'I was rather quick after your nephew at that place into the road, wasn't I? But it was the only time.'

This hardly improved matters, but fortunately the men in front turned round.

'We're going to gruel at the Chequers Arms,' they shouted.

'Then I'm with you,' screamed Miss Brand, glad of a diversion; 'trot on and order tea for us.'

Rawdon meant not to stop, but he had not the heart to disappoint his horse. So before he knew what was happening they were all sitting round the table in the parlour at tea, and he was with them. He managed, however, to get up first and start before any of the others. It infuriated him to see the way Miss Brand was making eyes at Jack, and he several times repeated to himself that she was a regular flirt.

He was not quite home when Jack caught him up; he too looked cross now, and seemed as silent as the older man.

'I'm going away to-morrow, Uncle Rawdon,' he said at length.

'Where are you going to?'

'The deuce,' he answered sullenly.

Rawdon looked up.

'What's all this?' he asked, wondering whether Jack could have noticed his jealousy.

'Nothing. At least—well, I'll tell you,' answered the boy, who could not keep quiet long. 'The fact is, though you haven't seen it, I've been regular gone on Miss Brand, and sometimes I began to think she liked me; just only a very little, of course,

'SHE LAUGHED AT ME'

but still just—— Upon my word I believe she led me on on purpose.'

'Perhaps she does like you.'

'No, she doesn't,' the boy shouted, 'for I've just asked her.'

'What did she say?'

'She laughed at me, laughed for five minutes,' he replied

hoarsely; 'said it was "too ridiculous," and that ten years hence would be time enough for me to begin to think about that sort of thing. Women are all the same. What they like is an old rake.'

'I am not at all so sure of that. I used to think Miss Brand was a nice girl,' he said, as if he were speaking of years ago, 'but I've seen through her. She's a woman who wants to have every man at her heels, and show the scalps afterwards.'

That Jack did not resent this description showed that he too had overrated the depth of his affection for her.

Then they turned into the stable-yard.

Justice has not been meted out to Miss Brand. On the contrary, she is going to marry a wealthy M.F.H., who is much too good for her. Therefore this story is wholly and entirely without a moral.

PROSPECTS OF THE RACING SEASON

BY ARTHUR B. PORTMAN

THE interest taken in 'chasing year after year is never strong nowadays, and is soon on the wane when the season begins, largely owing to the bad class of horse now performing at the game, and also, I regret to say it, to there being so few of the better class of owner engaged in cross-country sport. Lovers of the Turf, who naturally grow weary of the continuous appearance of crocks not worth 50*l.* apiece, will rejoice, therefore, at the advent of flat-racing on Monday, March 21. This, as usual for many years—except in the case of 1894, when, owing to Easter Monday falling on March 26, starts were made at Kempton and Gosforth Parks—will begin at Lincoln; and I think the prospects of the season are, take them all round, fairly bright, although it cannot be said that the bulk of the spring handicaps have obtained good entries, and it is a matter for regret that such old-established, and in former years generally interesting, events as the Goodwood Cup and Northamptonshire Stakes should have failed to fill. Some of the Ten Thousand Pounders of the future do not promise much interest, and the Newmarket Stakes—an injudicious race that should never have been instituted with the Two Thousand and Derby both so near to it—did not obtain the necessary subscriptions for 1900.

The race of the year that still, in spite of everything, retains the greatest glamour about it is the Derby, and this probably will be as long as racing lasts. None of the likely competitors for this year's Derby seem to approach in merit such really good horses as the last two winners, Persimmon and Galtee More, both of whom were far above the average, especially Persimmon, who, on the day he won the Ascot Gold Cup last season, would probably have troubled any racehorses that could have been pitted against him, no matter whether they were the Flying

Dutchman, Priam, West Australian, Plenipotentiary, Gladiateur, Blair Athol, Galopin, Kisber, St. Simon, Ormonde, or any other of the world-famous cracks of the past. Trying to compare horses of one generation with another is always, I admit, unsatisfactory; but I know that, even in the autumn of his three-year-old career, when not half the horse he was at Ascot in 1897, Persimmon could concede 4 st. and an easy beating to the extremely useful Safety Pin, which certainly points to his immense merit.

Not for years has any Derby borne so open an aspect as that of 1898. The nominal favourites are Dieudonné and Disraeli, with Hawfinch—recently sold to Mr. Horatio Bottomley for 5,000*l.*, and 1,000*l.* extra if he wins this race—practically on the same mark. One hears sensible people advocating the chances of Batt, Dunlop, Wildfowler, Jeddah, and others, whilst mysterious whispers are about respecting the merits of such dark horses as Angus, Ormathwaite, Isabinda (sister to St. Frusquin), Brio (a charming colt), Dearsley, and Gerolstein. Personally, I never believe much in horses that were too good to run as two-year-olds, and in consequence seldom take particular notice of the rumours always rife in the spring about some 'dark' youngster who is to come out in the Derby and beat the cracks of his age. Certainly Blair Athol, Merry Hampton, and Common did this, but innumerable others have proved absolute failures.

Besides the above, the Derby entry also includes Bridegroom II., Elfin, Florio Rubattino, Heir Male, the Jenny Howlet colt, Nightjar (tried very highly indeed before his Ascot failure), Orzil, King of Thebes, The Wyvern, St. Evox, Petty France (bought for 5,000 guineas as a yearling), Sarratt, and others that might certainly help to make up a most interesting contest. Any attempt at picking out the winner is a task which presents the gravest difficulties, but the two I most incline to are Batt and Disraeli. Of these the former, although bred in a way against which I have some prejudice—he is a son of Sheen and Vampire—is a charming brown colt, that prior to appearing at Ascot did so well in a trial with Guernsey and others that he started a great favourite for the Coventry Stakes, which, however, as most people remember, Orzil just won from Cap Martin, and the Duke of Westminster's colt ran what is called 'a perfect wretch.' But within twenty-four hours he was seized with a serious illness, which without doubt he had on him when running at Ascot, and it was not until the early autumn that he became himself again. Twice more after this Batt appeared as a two-year-old, each time at the Newmarket Houghton meeting: on the Tuesday,

in the Criterion Stakes, when he had all his work cut out to win by a neck from Royal Footstep, who was conceding him 8 lbs. actual weight, and secondly, on the Friday, when, evidently much benefited by his gallop of three days before, he cantered away with the mile Houghton Stakes, giving 15 lbs. to the second, Santhia. It is on his running in this race that I like Batt's chance for the Derby, as he performed his task in really good style, and also showed himself able to stay, which few of the leading youngsters of last season apparently could do.

Turning to my other pick, Disraeli, he is a nice-looking brother to Buckingham (Galopin—Lady Yardley), for whom Mr. Wallace Johnstone gave 1,000 guineas as a yearling, and, making his début when very backward at Derby in the Champion Breeders' Foal Stakes, he was not fancied by his connections, but jumping quickly off the mark was never caught, and won easily by a length and a half from Champ de Mars, who was trying to give him 11 lbs. Being then put by for the Middle Park Plate, Disraeli did very well until about a fortnight before the race, when he met with a slight accident in his stable, and developed a cough about a week afterwards, when just about to resume work. This cough he had almost shaken off when competing for what is still the greatest two-year-old race of the year, but ridden with no judgment in a false-run race, in which Orzil and he brought their field along at such a terrific pace that they were both quite pumped out ascending the hill from the Abingdon Mile Bottom, Disraeli could hardly raise a crawl in the last hundred yards, and was caught and easily defeated by Dieudonné. The following week Mr. Johnstone's colt ran for the Great Sapling Plate at Sandown Park, and when far from himself would, but for ill luck, have been second to Ninus, who was in receipt of 15 lbs. from him. That Disraeli, provided he can stay, will prove himself one of the best of his age this year I feel convinced, and that is the reason of my making him and Batt my selections for the Blue Riband. A possible outsider, however, is Jeddah, as he was virtually not trained last year, and may easily develop into anything.

With regard to the Two Thousand Guineas, the bulk of the horses in the Derby are also in the Newmarket race, but the entry includes Ninus, who, being excluded from the Epsom event, is likely to be specially trained for this, and may very probably win it.

The great races for fillies—namely, the One Thousand and Oaks —might be secured by Royal Footstep, provided she is cool and

well on the days when these events take place; but, as everyone knows, mares are 'kittle cattle' in the spring and early summer, and lose their form almost as often as they retain it. Rumour is already rife as to the merits of several two-year-olds, all of whom are credited with possessing probably far greater capacity than they are ever likely to exhibit, and wise people never believe much in early two-year-olds. Boniface and Sandringham, both sons of St. Simon, are, however, names that may become familiar.

Last year the Turf sustained a great loss by the retirement—it is to be hoped only temporary—of Lord Zetland and M. Robert Lebaudy, two owners who carried on their racing studs for love of sport, not entirely for gain. Some of the later additions to the list of owners have apparently not come to stay, and it is hinted that Dunlop, whom some good judges consider a very high-class colt, may be seen in new colours.

On the other hand, Mr. E. Cassel is now going to race largely, and has taken Golding as his private trainer, with an excellent adviser in Mr. Cecil Howard; and a gentleman whose name is well known, Mr. Horatio Bottomley, has during the past few months purchased Count Schomberg (for 5,100 guineas), Hawfinch (with a contingency of 1,000*l.* if he wins the Derby, for 5,000*l.*), Northern Farmer (for 2,500 guineas), and Le Blizon, a beautiful two-year-old (1,650 guineas).

One of the chief difficulties of an owner of horses continues to be the dearth of jockeys. I am not prepared to admit, however, that our notion of race-riding is all wrong, and that Sloan, who last autumn when he rode first was jeered at, and before the end of the season quite as absurdly adulated, is anything in the nature of a revelation. He is certainly an excellent judge of pace, he brings his horses truly through without riding them to a standstill, and I trust he will soon come back and ride here again; but, for all that, Watts, Morny Cannon, Rickaby, Sam Loates, Calder, and T. Loates are all sound horsemen, and would each have my preference over the American, who, I heard a usually sensible devotee of the Turf say at the Derby November Meeting, was the finest jockey he had ever seen cross a horse. Yet three weeks previously, at the Houghton Meeting, my friend compared Sloan to a 'monkey on a stick.' What a thing is fashion in this world, and how quickly men change their opinions!

LACROSSE: HOW, WHEN, AND WHERE TO SEE IT

BY W. STEPNEY RAWSON

THE question is often asked, 'Where can a game of Lacrosse be seen?' The same might have been said of golf thirty years ago. and yet how great a change has been seen in the last ten years! Probably it is too much to expect any such abnormal development of Lacrosse; but it is not beyond the bounds of possibility, for the last ten years have seen a very large increase in the number of clubs and a more than proportional increase in the number of players.

In the early seventies Association football was in its infancy: indeed, the first inter-university match at 'Socker' was, if I am not mistaken, in 1874, when only a few hundred spectators saw Oxford beat Cambridge at the Oval. Therefore, at Lacrosse, enthusiasts need not be ashamed of their progress, since the first round of the Senior and Junior Flag competitions in November last produced sixteen matches in London, in which nearly four hundred players took part, while the neighbourhood of Manchester must often see twice this number engaged.

The comparative rarity of Lacrosse is certainly no argument

against its excellence or against the possible extension of it in the future to a degree commensurate with that of other better-known games. That it possesses every element of a first-class game is acknowledged on all sides, so that its slow spread must be due to some special causes, of which the principal reason no doubt is the competition of other firmly established games; but beyond this there appear to me to be one or two reasons why the spread of Lacrosse is retarded. The first is that in England it must be played in the winter, owing to the conditions of our climate and the hard-and-fast line which is firmly drawn between our summer and winter games. In Canada, on the contrary, climatic conditions compel it to be played in the summer, to the immense advantage of the game itself, for it is of the greatest importance that the light should be so good as to enable the ball to be clearly seen from one goal to the other, a distance of about one hundred and twenty yards. During at least one third of the regular season in England, which lasts from October to April, the light is so poor that players are severely handicapped, and bad play is the result. Nor does the state of our grounds in the winter tend to improve matters, though happily Lacrosse players very seldom have to wade about in mud, such as one often sees churned up on a hard-worked football ground.

It is unfortunate that cricket grounds cannot be more often secured by Lacrosse clubs during the winter. There is a feeling among committees of cricket clubs that the turf would be damaged by the play, but that is quite imaginary. More harm is done to a ground by one game of football than by a whole season's Lacrosse. The light rubber-soled shoes enjoined by the rules are incapable of doing harm to turf, while the treading down of the grass is rather advantageous than otherwise.

Besides handicapping the players, the conditions of light and ground affect even more strongly those who come to look on; for in the best light the rapidity of the game makes it difficult to follow the ball, except for one who knows beforehand where to look, while the inability of the players to show the finer points of the game produces upon the spectators the same effect as one sees when cricket is played on a bad or sodden ground. Therefore to a would-be spectator of Lacrosse I invariably reply, 'Wait till the latter part of the season, when the light and ground are good and the best matches are being played; go down with a player who can give you a few hints as to the points, and you will be hard to please if you do not agree that Lacrosse possesses all the essentials of a first-class game.'

There is a good deal of difference between what may be called an 'exhibition' game and a keenly fought match between two clubs. I remember clearly the impression left upon my mind by the first game I saw some years ago between the Canadians and Indians at Lord's. This was purely an exhibition, and as such it was fairly interesting, as showing the large variety of throws and the great skill in passing and catching which is necessary. But the average Englishman requires more than this in a game. He must have that keen spirit of rivalry and honest endeavour to win which leads players on to those supreme efforts so easily recognised by the spectator. This feeling is seldom present in an exhibition game, and the interest of the onlookers soon flags in consequence. This fatal mistake was made some years ago when two purely scratch teams played at Oxford, where the then Captain of cricket took great interest in the matter, and gathered together a large number of spectators with a view to arousing interest in a game which had been practised for several years at the sister University. A lack of enthusiasm in the players soon spread to the onlookers, with the result that an otherwise well-organised effort was frustrated by a very slight want of foresight. It is to be hoped that before long steps may be taken to repair this mistake. Cambridge University has continued to support Lacrosse, and at Oxford there must be a substantial number of men who, while playing cricket or tennis during the summer, do not happen to have devoted themselves sufficiently to football or rowing to qualify for representative teams or eights. They would find Lacrosse a splendid sport to keep them in condition during the winter, and there are always a few in residence from the schools where Lacrosse is played, in addition to a sprinkling of Canadians, every one of whom has learned to handle a crosse. There is no doubt that both Cambridge and metropolitan players would cordially assist any movement in favour of the game at Oxford.

In strong contrast to the above-mentioned exhibition at Oxford was a more recent match arranged by the officers of the Royal Engineers on the lines at Chatham, between two leading and rival London clubs, who, at the end of the season, were quite ready to put the question to the test once more. In spite of the effects of a hot day in April the game was prolonged an extra half-hour at the unanimous request of a large crowd, who were delighted with what they saw for the first time.

It is considered by some that the inherent difficulty of learning to handle a crosse militates against the spread of the game.

With this view I cannot agree. The difficulties, such as they are, constitute one of its great attractions, just as in billiards and golf. A very little practice will enable anyone to catch and throw more or less correctly, but the perfect control of the ball at full speed is a question depending largely upon a man's physical aptitude, while the playing of the game itself is so far a question of brains and actual study that even men of inferior physique may often be preferable to those who play the game with the intelligence of a 'bull in a china shop.'

The homes of Lacrosse in Great Britain are London, Manchester, and Belfast. It is fast extending in the neighbourhoods of Exeter and Bristol, while Harrogate contains two or three boys' schools where it is now played. The Irish have followed the Canadians in choosing the summer season for the game, which introduces some difficulty in the dates of the International matches with England, where the winter season is uniformly adopted.

Considering, therefore, England only, I have pointed out that for the would-be spectator March is the best month, for he can then see, under favourable conditions of light and ground, the later matches for the Flag competitions, either in the Northern or Southern Associations. These competitions are on the tournament principle, so that the final matches generally produce the closest results and the highest standard of play.

In the earlier rounds the clubs play on their own grounds, but the final must be played on a neutral ground. In the South, the locale generally selected is the Athletic Ground at Richmond, which is admirably adapted to the purpose. The large enclosure at the Crystal Palace has also been the scene of some good matches. In the Manchester district the favourite place is the Didsbury Cricket Ground, but others, such as the Manchester Athletic Ground, have their turn.

Within the last three years a cup for the Championship of England has been presented to the English Lacrosse Union, and named the Iroquois Cup, to be played for by the respective winners of the Northern and Southern Flag competitions. The venue is alternately London and Manchester, and this year (1898) it will be played in London.

As this match produces the best class of combined play to be found in England, I should select it in preference to any other as an exhibition of the true game. In addition to the Flag ties, there are, both in the North and the South, competitions on league lines, scoring by points, and extending over the whole season.

My readers, having now some idea of when and where to go in order to see a good match, would naturally prefer to be accompanied by someone who is a player and able to give them some hints as the game progresses. If so, let them avoid choosing a member of either of the competing clubs, unless he can be relied upon to possess a *mens sana* as well as the *corpus sanum*, which, as a player, he must have. No game is so exciting as Lacrosse to a partisan who understands each point, for the changes of fortune and the sudden developments are so kaleidoscopic in their rapidity that even the most composed Briton is very likely to be roused to a state of quasi-lunacy in which he is quite incapable of giving any coherent explanations. Who can forget the blood-curdling yells of 'Big John,' the Indian field-captain, when the Canadians and Indians played in London? This noble chieftain, in full panoply of feathers and beads, appeared at times to be absolutely raving, though he was no more irrational than many enthusiasts appear to be when a first-rate match is in progress.

It is the ever-varying and extraordinarily rapid alternations in the game which exert such fascination upon the onlooker. As will be seen when the question of long throws is dealt with later on, one goal may be in imminent danger at one moment, and within five seconds there may be an equally good chance of a goal being obtained at the other end.

Failing, therefore, the assistance of a friend who can calm himself to be of real service, it will, perhaps, be well to master beforehand a few of the salient points of the play, without which knowledge much of the beauty of the game may be lost.

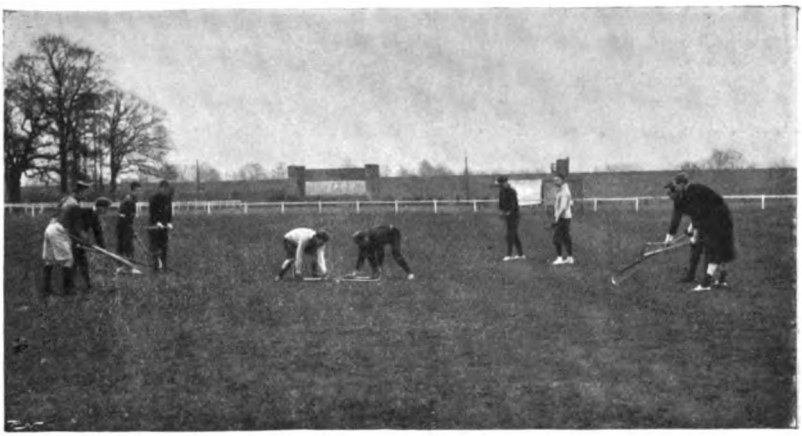
There is, perhaps, no game which requires the exercise of so much judgment or which must have that judgment exercised so rapidly, while few games punish the errors of judgment so fatally as Lacrosse. In Lacrosse we have a side of twelve players, each one of whom (thanks to the rapidity of the ball's flight) is in possible touch with every other member. Perhaps in cricket there is, on the fielding side, some approximation to this in the case of a bowler or a wicket-keeper; but how far can long leg be said to concern himself with deep third man? A moment's consideration will show how infinitely more difficult it is to decide exactly one's relation to eleven other players, any one of whom is within immediate touch either for attack or defence.

With these few hints as to what we may expect to see let us suppose that we have taken up a position, preferably in a stand at the side of the ground; for, as the play goes on all round goal, behind as well as in front, we cannot stand behind, and unless we

are somewhat above the level of the players we shall miss some of the most interesting points.

The first and most important fact we notice is that the players are distributed over the field in pairs, and it is soon evident that the offside rule, which obtains in football and hockey, is absent in Lacrosse.

The 'face' is characteristic of Lacrosse, and takes place whenever the game is interrupted for any reason except for a 'free position' (*i.e.* free throw) being given for a foul. The two players hold their crosses down upon the ground, the ball being between the two crosses, which are back to back, and each player having his left shoulder towards the goal he is attacking. At the word 'play' the crosses are drawn sharply inwards without



THE FACE

removing them from the ground, so that the ball is forced out and into play. In past years much more freedom was allowed in respect of the tactics after the call of 'play,' and many pretty little devices were elaborated by players for obtaining the ball from the 'face' or for passing to a player of the same side by a turn of the crosse. But a 'face' often led to a prolonged scrimmage, to which the present rule has put a stop. It contrasts favourably with the solemn tapping of sticks which takes place in hockey.

As the two 'centres' prepare for the 'face' we can note the disposition of the various pairs. Grouped round the 'centres' are four pairs of attack and defence 'fields,' forming with the 'centres' a pattern very familiar to the five dots on the face of a die. Between the 'centres' and each goal, in a more or less

direct line, are three 'homes,' first, second, and third, counting from the goal, each being checked by its respective defences, known as 'point,' 'cover point,' and 'third man.' These names will be at once recognised as being borrowed from cricket. The goalkeeper at each end has no separate check. He has to defend what in Canada is called 'the flags,' but what, in imitation of football, has in England become a bag net with an opening six feet square, in front of which is marked a crease at the distance of a few feet; and inside this an opponent must not stand until the ball has passed within it.

The goal appears to the eye of a football player to be absurdly small, but the size of the ball and the speed at which it comes must be considered. In size this closely resembles a lawn-tennis ball, and is of solid 'sponge' rubber weighing about four and a half ounces. Of late years the weight and hardness of the standard ball have been reduced on account of the possibility of a dangerous blow from the older type of ball. When it is remembered that a ball has been thrown by Barney Quinn, of Ottawa, slightly over 162 yards, 'all carry' as a golfer would say, it is clear that a goalkeeper's life would not be quite a happy one if the 'homes' were likely to be able to put in shots at goal from short distances at this speed; but in fact it is very seldom that anyone is allowed by the defences to have a shot unchecked, and the majority of goals are obtained with quick wrist shots, which are not of very great speed, but when they come to the goalkeeper off the ground, very much like a good length ball at cricket, they are very puzzling on any but the most perfect grounds. The illustration shows clearly how an attack is hampered by the checker just in front of goal. The former is quite unable to put his weight into the shot for fear of meeting the other crosse and so losing direction: he, therefore, leans rather backwards and flicks the ball downwards with his arms and wrists, trusting rather to the ground than to the pace to deceive the goalkeeper. The position of the latter nearly outside the post appears exaggerated, but in this case the shot is from the side, and the goalkeeper, being right-handed, covers the farther part of the goal with his crosse, while his body covers the near side.

In England the record throw stands at 124 yards, by H. Booth, of Leys School, and, owing to the lighter ball now used, this is likely to remain unbeaten for a long time to come. Cricketers will note that the Canadian throw is about eight yards longer than Mr. Thornton's great hit into the racquet court at the Oval

in the early seventies, while the English record is a few yards short of Mr. Game's throw with a cricket ball at Oxford a few years later.

We have now seen the field for a moment at rest, awaiting the 'face,' and have noticed generally the disposition for attack and defence; but as 'play' is called all this mathematical precision seems to be flung to the winds, and to an inexperienced eye the players appear to 'swarm around' much at their own sweet will. This is certainly the feeling to a novice, even one well accustomed to football, who may be told to keep a certain position in the field, and may try his best to do so; but, unless he is gifted with marvellous intuition, soon finds himself astray and trying to be in two places at once, with the result that he declares

A SHOT AT GOAL

Lacrosse to be the hardest work he ever had to do, and that only youngsters can possibly play such a game. This is far more apparent than real.

There are two players in the South who still do useful work for their club, and whose united ages fall only two short of the century! This is a powerful argument both in favour of the attraction of the game to a player and against the view that only young men are fitted to play it. A 'glutton for work' can obtain his fill at Lacrosse, but he will probably find it to no purpose unless it is tempered with judgment. I have been told by a young player who has just learned to 'play his place' on the field, 'It seems to me to be twice the fun and half the work,' to which I have been tempted to reply, 'Yes, and the result is twice as

valuable to your side.' *Bis dat qui cito dat* is a motto for young Lacrosse players the truth of which takes a long time to sink into their minds. The numerous throws and great variety of tricks of play cannot possibly be set out briefly, so I have selected four positions showing the two commonest types of throws. The most attractive features of the game, such as quick passing and catching, are beyond reproduction, even by instantaneous photography, some of the results I have seen being most interesting physical studies, but very unlike the actual impression produced upon the eye of a spectator.

In the first position we have a defence player preparing for the underhand throw. The figure of the attacking player is

UNDERHAND THROW, FIRST POSITION

introduced so as to show the relative positions of the two. It will be seen that the defence player turns his back to the other (making it almost impossible for the latter to reach either the crosse or the ball), and then swings round on his hips (much as in full drive at golf), and ends in the second position. The ball seen resting against the stick is prevented from flying out by the face of the stick, along which it runs to the far end, where the edge is flattened down to allow it to pass freely away. The whole action is of the nature of a sling, the control of the ball being maintained by the more or less turning over of the left wrist. The throw is the most striking of all those used in the game—it is essentially a defence

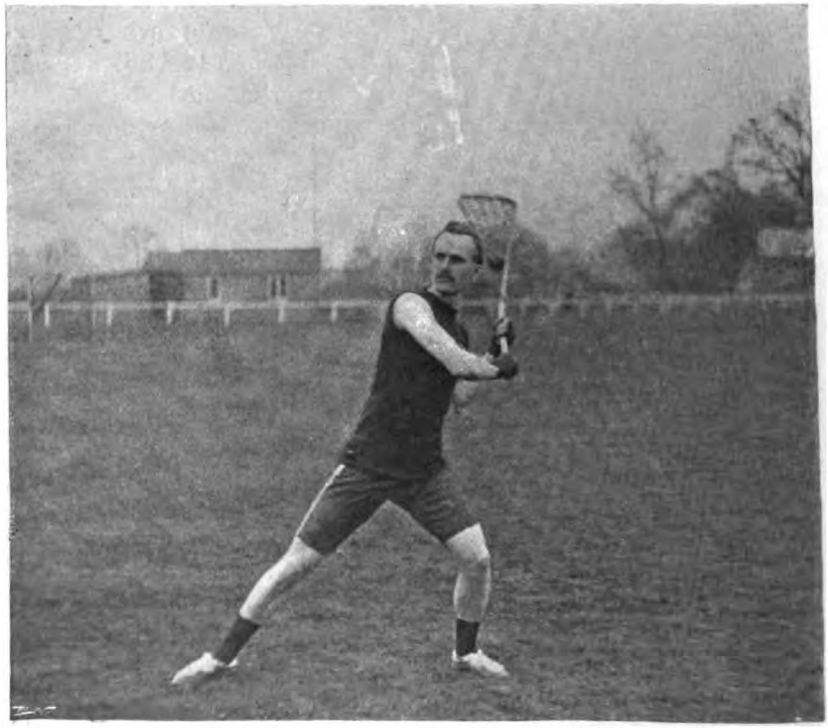
throw, very hard to execute correctly as regards direction, and almost hopeless to check. It will be seen that the sweep of the crosse looks as if it would neatly behead the checker, whose aim, however, is to get his body into close quarters, clear of the swing, while his crosse meets the other *en route*, and more or less spoils the shot. So small, however, is the chance of doing this that in a game it will be frequently noticed that when once a player has got into the first position he is allowed to have his throw

UNDERHAND THROW, SECOND POSITION

unmolested. The 'slice' put on the ball by this throw is tremendous, so that the flight is not so great as it would otherwise be, though the action is undoubtedly the most perfect that could be devised for giving impetus to the ball.

In the left overhand throw we see the same player throwing from the left shoulder. As a defence player he is seen to be leaning back as far as possible, out of the way of an opponent coming to check him. The left hand is still next the netting, but

instead of being the less important of the two, as in the underhand throw, it now becomes the principal agent. This appears clearly in the right overhand throw, which is taken at the moment of delivery of a shot from the right shoulder. The player seems almost to be pointing with his right hand at some mark, and, in fact, it is this hand (now the uppermost) which turns the stick over so as to cause the ball to take just the required trajectory.



LEFT OVERHAND THROW

The following are a few short hints extracted from those drawn up by Mr. F. Sachs and myself some years ago for the benefit of beginners. In them we endeavoured to represent in parallel columns the main principles of attack with the corresponding defence play; and though greater freedom of tactics is naturally indulged in by advanced players, the reader will find in the hints an outline of the game which may help to make it intelligible even on first acquaintance.

For Attack Players

1. Your primary object is to find yourself between your checker and his goal, therefore in manœuvring keep in the 'inside' as much as possible.

2. When your side has the ball keep well on the move so as to confuse your checker, and remember you cannot be passed to unless you are loose and in a favourable position.

For Defence Players

1. Your primary object is to keep yourself between your attack player and your own goal, therefore in following him keep on the inside of him, and be sure he does not get a throw.

2. Even the keenest attack may be paralysed by persistent and leech-like checking. The result cannot fail to be of the utmost advantage to your side.

RIGHT OVERHAND THROW

3. In the case of a long throw-up, if your checker goes for the ball your positions are immediately reversed, and you must follow him, check him, and prevent his throw, as if he were an attack and you a defence player.

4. Combination is the essence of the game. A selfish player is only just preferable to a blind one.

3. When the ball comes up let your man go for it, but wait on him so closely as to prevent him getting it, and check his stick so that the ball comes past him to you. Never get in front to go for the ball.

4. The prevention of passing and throwing at goal is the essence of the game. A safe player is always to be preferred to a showy one.

For Attack Players

5. If the exact moment for a pass is lost it may never occur again, so let it be quick, straight, and timely. *Never* dodge or run when a safe pass forward is possible.

6. When one of your side is making for the goal, draw off to the side, which will either clear the way or leave you free to be passed to.

7. There are plenty of strokes possible for you. Do not be dismayed if it takes a long time to learn them.

For Defence Players

5. Check your man so closely that a safe pass is impossible. Body-check all dodgers and runners. Never dodge or run when a throw is possible—and it nearly always is.

6. Reserve your energies whenever possible by keeping inside and watching your man warily, so that you cover but little ground.

7. Every stroke has a possible check. Study the former so that you may be effective with the latter.

Of the above hints later experience has proved the most important to be, for attack players, Nos. 5 and 6, and, for defence players, Nos. 2 and 5.

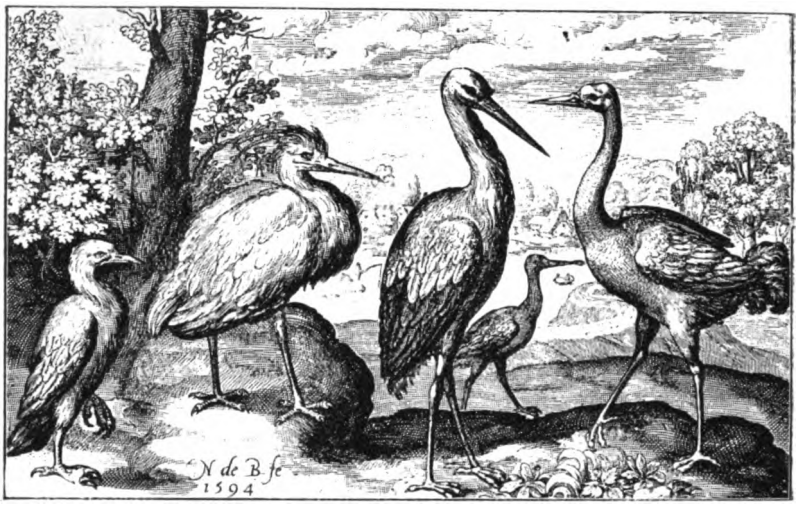
To know intuitively when to pass, and to execute that pass correctly, sums up the ideal of an attack player. To break up the combination of an attack by close checking and to get the ball away constitute the whole duty of defence. A cool head and complete unselfishness stamp the successful attack player, while safety and pertinacity qualify a man for any place on defence.

On these lines, mathematically precise but kaleidoscopic in appearance, is the game played. If a player is injured the even balance of pairs is not disturbed, for the rules compel a second player to withdraw so that the balance is restored. This rule is an excellent one, and I recommend it to all football unions and councils. How many games of Rugby football have this season been decided less by the superiority of play than by the bad luck of an accident? Why, again, should there be any inducement for a player to continue playing after he has broken his collar-bone? Yet I have known this done voluntarily in a most important match rather than allow an odd man on the other side. The necessity for running such a risk should be avoided by the rules, and the Lacrosse rule is a very sensible one.

Again, deliberate fouls and unfair play are promptly and effectively dealt with under Lacrosse laws. The offender is put off till a goal is scored, and the penalty of an odd man is so severe that it is practically equivalent to a goal. While there can be no doubt that Lacrosse brings out all the best points of a player's pluck and determination, there is no reason to believe that it may ultimately become a rough or brutal game. Only the lightest shoes are allowed by the rules, and charging, as well as any deliberate

striking or pushing with the crosse, are rigorously forbidden under the English code. The crosse, being about five feet in length, is naturally a formidable weapon, and if passions are roused might be used brutally; but such use is so obvious to a referee, and the penalty is so heavy, that players seldom require any protection except a pair of padded gloves, and sometimes a light guard for the wrist. Even for girls the game strikes the mean between the ultra-effeminate and the unnecessarily boisterous. Near St. Andrews the ladies of St. Helen's College have played for some years, while the pupils of the beautiful Abbey School at High Wycombe have recently learned the game under the tuition of a well-known Toronto player; and I hear that as a game for ladies Lacrosse is a revelation.

The future of our games, like our race, must end in the survival of the fittest. My view at present is that there is plenty of room for a new game, if it is really first-rate, as Lacrosse undoubtedly is: time only will prove if my estimate of its fitness is correct or not.



NOTES

BY 'RAPIER'

It is rather absurd to try to discover the winner of the Grand National by intricate calculations as to the giving or receiving of a few pounds of weight; because the four and a half miles at Liverpool, over all those big fences, constitute a course the like of which is encountered nowhere else. What one has chiefly to discover is, which of the field has shown capacity to get the distance over the jumps. Weight is, at the same time, it need hardly be said, by no manner of means to be disregarded. What I intend to suggest is that one cannot go into real niceties and details as one can (occasionally with results which justify conclusions) in mile handicaps on the flat. Weight is one of the great questions in considering Manifesto's prospects. He stays and jumps, and has a very fair turn of speed for a 'chaser; but is 12 st. 7 lb. a bit too much? As most of my readers are doubtless aware, he has lately been sold; and another question is as to his rider? He may not have a very experienced jockey on his back, and though Nationals have been won by horsemen whom one would certainly not have picked for choice Count Kinsky on Zoedone and Lord Manners on Seaman—a vast deal may depend on the rider; if, on the other hand, with luck, he may simply

have to sit tight and be carried home. In the Liverpool, horses are just about as likely to be knocked down as to finish. This is not a random statement. Some years, more than half stand up and escape disaster, no doubt; in 1890, on the contrary, eleven out of sixteen starters came to grief; so that to find the best horse at the weights is one thing, and to find the winner may be quite another. If Manifesto stands up, as he did last year, and failed to do the year before, he is certain to be very near, and his chance, even with Cloister's weight—a weight always considered impossible till Mr. Charles Duff's horse carried it—appears to me as good as that of anything else with a good man on his back. I did not see the race last year, but those on whose judgment I can rely tell me that Timon was not out of it when he fell, and, as he meets Manifesto on better terms, he must be dangerous.

I certainly thought that Barcalwhey was so leniently treated that the question of weight must in his case be taken into the discussion—that is to say, that he held a very decided advantage; but he had jumped badly at Sandown before he fell, and he is the more likely to fall at Liverpool because R. Chaloner apparently prefers to be in the middle of a big field of horses; it cannot be hoped that he will take his own course, away from the crowd and the consequent chance of accident, and so if anything should fall in front of him, or swerve as a fence is neared, over he is likely to go. Mr. Reginald Ward was always quite convinced that he held Barcalwhey safe with Cathal, and this horse, after showing much waywardness in public and in private, has lately mended his manners; but it remains to be seen if the reformation is permanent. The Shaker is a nice young horse, and improves every day, for it is only just a year since he was taken up from grass; still I think I am right in saying that only four five-year-olds have been successful in the history of the race, and so one naturally prefers more seasoned animals. Last year Mr. David Campbell, The Soarer's jockey, told me he thought the surest thing about the race was that Prince Albert would finish in the first three. It was regarded as certain (as certain as anything can be at Liverpool) that he would get the course and jump the country; but he just missed third place. Where he is obviously Ford of Fyne ought to be. I was much pleased with Dead Level's performance at Sandown; and what a difference the extra year from five to six makes at Aintree is shown by the fact that, since 1860, ten six-year-olds have won—Emblematic,

The Lamb, The Colonel, Disturbance, Reugny, Seaman, Zoedone, Voluptuary, Roquefort, and Ilex. Dead Level had a 10-lb. penalty at Sandown, and it is to be noted that he will meet Shaker with an advantage of 8 lb. in comparison with the Sandown running; but he may not be able quite to stay the course.

About this time last year and the year before, I quoted a handicap of the best three-year-olds, kindly made for me by a friend, a member of a Jockey Club, for whose opinion I have the greatest respect. That opinion was much strengthened by the Notes he so kindly sent me, for I believed in Regret—it seems absurd now, but the reasons for the faith struck me at the time as highly convincing—and he also thought that Galtee More was sure to beat Velasquez whenever they met, whereas I fancied Lord Rosebery's colt. My friend's 1896 handicap was:

	st.	lb.
St. Frusquin	9	7
Persimmon	8	12
Regret	8	7
Knight of the Thistle	8	0

It is not very often that a handicap bears subsequent inspection so well. St. Frusquin may not have been 9 lb. in front of Persimmon, but I always believed him to be decidedly the better, and the public did the same, as was shown by the fact that they made him so emphatically favourite for the St. Leger before he broke down; and in this connection I may observe that I do not by any means share the extremely exalted opinion of Persimmon expressed by my contributor in a preceding article. My friend's 1897 handicap was:

	st.	lb.
Galtee More	9	0
Vesuvian	8	10
Velasquez	8	7

Of course, that did not come out correctly as regards the two latter, for in the Princess of Wales' Stakes, Velasquez gave 3 lb. and beat Vesuvian eight or ten lengths; but I doubt whether Vesuvian was ever quite himself, in spite of his Ascot victory.

The ideas of so obviously sound a judge, are, it will be seen, well worth obtaining, and this year my friend writes, beginning by saying that he never saw Disraeli or Cyllene run. 'I have seen most of the others,' he continues, 'and I think that Dieudonné would beat them all easily over six furlongs. But Dieudonné

evidently cannot stay, so how is he to win the Derby? I shall expect to see these moderate horses in front at Epsom:

Batt	1
Wildfowler	2
Hawfinch	3

I leave out Disraeli because I think he is not bred to stay the course. Don't think hardly of me for expressing opinions which I am sure are not at all in accord with your own.' Of course this question of staying is all-important. I do not see why a son of Galopin and a Sterling mare should not stay, but no one can tell whether Disraeli does so. *If* he does, he must hold Wildfowler absolutely safe, for when they met in the Middle Park Plate, Disraeli, short of work and coughing, after galloping many lengths in front of the field at a terrific pace with Orzil, and taking all the steel out of himself, nevertheless beat Wildfowler and, moreover, gave him 3 lbs. Wildfowler *was* well that day, and started almost as good a favourite as Orzil—3 to 1 and 7 to 2. If Wildfowler can stay, however, and Disraeli cannot, the running may doubtless be reversed. Batt is a colt in which I find that many people have faith, and he won the Houghton Stakes over the Rowley Mile in very taking fashion. He beat next to nothing, however, and two days before had been hard put to it to dispose of Royal Footstep, when she was short of work, and was giving him 5 lb. more than weight for age. That gallop probably did him good, but the performance as it stands is very moderate. Batt's Ascot running may be entirely put aside, and it is very possible that he is an animal that will have to be reckoned with.

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People seem to have an idea that Hawfinch was quite untrained when he ran for the Dewhurst Plate. I can only say that he pulled up after that remarkable contest as if he had done plenty of work, and it will amaze me very much if John Porter ever receives a cheque for the 1,000*l.* he is to have if the colt wins the Derby. By the way, whilst on the subject of the great Epsom race, I may caution my readers, if they are readers also of 'Truth,' to pay no sort of attention to the pretended knowledge of the writer of the racing article in that journal. It chances that I happen really to know something about one stable which this scribe lately discussed. He informed the world, amongst other things, that a certain horse was intended to run for a certain race—he 'will be specially prepared for it' were his words—and went

into other details. The tone he adopted would naturally have led anybody who was not better informed to suppose that he must have had at least *some* reasonable authority for his assertion. In the case in question he could have had absolutely none; and as there is no obvious ground to suppose that when he writes of other stables with equal positiveness he is not equally ignorant, this word of warning may be just worth giving.

'Cross-country sport has been singularly uninteresting this winter. The cause is generally attributed to lack of horses, but my idea is that the weak point is lack of stewards. As thus: so many suspicious occurrences are passed by unheeded that not a few gentlemen who are fond of 'chasing, and would like to amuse themselves with a few horses, prefer to have nothing to do with it, and the sport is in a great measure left in worse than doubtful hands. The position is difficult, for it is so simple for a rider who did not want to win to say, when questioned, that his horse made a bad mistake and he could never quite get it going again. So lax is the *morale* that it is not at all an unusual thing to hear those who would be generally regarded as gentlemen of unimpeachable character quietly saying that they fancy such-and-such a horse because they 'don't think it was having much of a go last week.' A fraud was committed, and they practically become accessories after the fact. New blood is the requisite, and it is wanted in horses, owners, and most assuredly, as aforesaid, in stewards.

On the subject of 'kills to cartridges' I noted in a recent number that a clergyman of whom I knew had the 'charming ideal of half and half.' I have received the following. 'If I am the clergyman referred to in your Notes, it may interest you to know that I have accomplished the "charming ideal of half and half," at all events this season, having fired 1,600 cartridges and killed—

Rabbits	320
Partridges	315
Pheasants	146
Hares	16
Woodcock	1
Landrail	1
Pigeons	7
Total (all gathered)	806

I have taken all shots as they came, fired a good many "hopeless" ones, and have not had the idea of making a good average in mind. I simply keep account of what I kill and the cartridges I use. But I certainly don't think I am more than a good average shot; there are several men in this neighbourhood who are better shots than I, though no doubt there are more who are not so good. There has, of course, been much variety in the days. Take, for instance, three consecutive days lately, in which I happened to fire exactly one hundred cartridges. The first was partridge driving in a bright low sun; the hedges for the most part were so low that one had to squat or kneel behind them or stand in ditches, and the shooting was decidedly difficult. I fired twenty-six shots and only gathered five birds. The next day was driving under pleasanter circumstances. I again fired twenty-six shots, but gathered seventeen head. The next day was a shoot in a big wood, rabbits in covert and cock pheasants. I happened to fire forty-eight shots and gathered thirty-five head. So that though I made such a bad start the first day with average below one in five, the next two days made it up to fifty-seven head for the one hundred shots. Perhaps on the last two days I was more than usually favoured by circumstances, but I can't help thinking that a good average shot ought to kill at least forty to forty-five in one hundred all the season round, and without any picking.' Well! I have very rarely seen anything like that done, and I have given the views of such authorities as Lord Walsingham, Mr. John Scott-Montagu, M.P., and Mr. A. J. Stuart-Wortley, amongst others.

One of my contributors, Mr. G. Christopher Davies, writes to me: 'A discussion as to the proportion of cartridges to kills is as vain as the question which is the best nitro. There is, however, a point which is surely capable of decision, and that is, the comparative value of the short two-inch cartridges, with a small charge of concentrated powder, which, under the name of 'Pigmies,' are sold by one of the leading London gunmakers. I shot an experimental hundred one day partridge driving, and never killed quicker or cleaner, particularly high birds coming down wind. It may be that I myself was in better form than usual, or the powder (Walsrode) is quicker than Schultze, which I otherwise invariably use, but certainly the short cartridge suited my gun, which has the usual length of chamber. As there is a considerable saving

of bulk and weight in the short cartridge, why, if other things are equal, use long ones?' I see no harm in mentioning that the gunmaker in question is Mr. Charles Lancaster, and I may add that I have heard these Pigmies much commended, though I never used any; and it is unfortunately too late this season.

I never publish verse in the body of the Magazine because good verse is so rare and bad verse so depressing; but these Sapphics by Mr. Guy C. Pollock, son of a well-known literary father, struck me as so good that I must devote a page of Notes to them.

TO A DRIVEN PARTRIDGE

You, driven, neatly killed, and nicely basted,
Wily, swift-flying January partridge,
Are a good morsel—on you have I wasted
Many a cartridge.

Only this thought your victory can soften—
I, as a child, your ancestors have eaten,
Though, as a man, by you have I been often
Dreadfully beaten.

When, behind hedges, waiting for the sound of
'Mark!' and 'Mark over!' rabbits I've rejected;
After your passing lies a heap around of
Empties ejected.

Vainly I watch your masterly retreating,
Not to be found by dog have any fallen;
Took never pheasant such a lot of beating,
Even a tall 'un.

Yet on the wing to get you from the furrow
Has to my plodding beaters been employment;
So I salute and thank you for some thorough
Days of enjoyment.

There can be no glossing over the fact that the performances of Mr. Stoddart's Eleven in Australia have been distinctly disappointing. One hears it said by way of excuse that the English-

men are stale—they had been playing cricket here all the summer, and are being kept at it all the winter too. That may be allowed to count for something, no doubt; and one may admit that the climate is all against them, the great heat having a prostrating effect. But then our men do not play badly. They play well, they run up big scores, not seldom the bowlers seem to 'come off;' but the Australians play better, their scores are bigger, their bowlers make finer averages. The Australians, again, derive no little advantage from being at home, on their own grounds; but it must not be forgotten that most of the teams that have come over to us have done notable things on our grounds, and that, moreover, when they had been playing cricket all their summer, and had the same excuses of staleness and change of climate that are put forward for Mr. Stoddart's eleven. As for the constitution of the English team, most cricketers and lovers of cricket have their fancies for and against certain players; but it will be generally agreed that on the whole it would have been difficult to select a more thoroughly representative band. The accounts of matches cabled over have been full of disappointments for us. It is abundantly evident that they play admirable cricket in the Antipodes. That excellent critic and player Mr. W. J. Ford will have something to say on this subject in the next number.

Badminton has been one of the best known of what are called 'the ancestral homes of England' for very many generations; there is a club called 'The Badminton,' which most people have heard of; there is a popular game called Badminton, and there is also an innocuous drink bearing the same name; furthermore, eight-and-twenty volumes of 'The Badminton Library' have been issued; they have been reviewed and commented on frequently all over the world for the last fifteen years or so; and finally the Magazine, the circulation of which is not small, has now reached its thirty-second number. Advertisements of the Library and of the Magazine constantly appear in myriads of papers. It might really have been supposed that the name of 'Badminton' was tolerably well known; and yet it is a fact that a good 20 per cent. of the letters that reach me are addressed to the Editor of the 'BADMINGTON.' I cannot imagine why this is so, but so it is! While thus gossiping rather at large, may I beg contributors to observe two things: in the first place, never to send a MS. which has not the author's name and address on it,

for the accompanying letter is always likely to be lost or mislaid, the consequence being inability to identify the writer; in the second place, in the case of comparatively inexperienced writers, to leave out, say, 30 per cent. of the 'ands' which occur in their copy. The slipshod habit of running on long sentences with a repetition of the conjunction is the commonest trick of all those by which the bad writer is revealed. I have been editing for twenty years, during which period I have been over MSS. and proofs, say, 250 days a year. I am convinced that on an average I have struck out 'and' at least forty times a day; that makes 200,000 'ands' from which I have saved sensitive readers who are annoyed by clumsy, careless, and ill-balanced sentences.

Inquiries often reach me about the originals of the pictures that appear in this Magazine, as to whether they are to be bought. I am asked to say that a great many of them—those which have not already been sold, in fact—may be obtained on application to the publishers, 39 Paternoster Row, who will answer all questions as to prices, &c. I have no idea what are still to be had. There has naturally been a demand for Mr. A. Thorburn's birds, and for the work of some other specially popular artists. It would not do for an editor to commend his own wares, for that would come almost under the head of the 'self-praise' which is 'no recommendation,' but it will surprise me if more than one person does not try for the original of Mr. H. M. Brock's terrified scorcher, illustrating Lord Moncreiff's judicial utterances.

THE
BADMINTON MAGAZINE
April 1898

THE METAMORPHOSIS OF THE PUDLINGTON

BY G. H. JALLAND

FROM time immemorial the farmers of Pudlington had kept a pack of fox-hounds. Theirs was none of your modern up-to-date hunts with palatial kennels and hordes of helpers. The ancient plan, when each sportsman lodged a hound or two and brought them to the meet on a hunting morning, was good enough for them, and they prided themselves on the fact that their method had remained unchanged for generations. Like their owners, the hounds were of old-fashioned stamp—not racy, flashy, tongueless greyhounds that can only show sport when scent is good, and, on the few days they are able to run, travel too fast for the majority of their followers; but deep-chested, short-legged Solomons, with full melodious voices and noses that the coldest clay scenting failed to baffle—if you gave 'em time enough. Patient and painstaking they truly were, but their most ardent admirers could not claim speed as one of their qualities. However, they went quite fast enough for the hairy-heeled mounts of their masters. If the foxes beat them more often than not, what matter—they showed beautiful hunting runs, often of many hours' duration, and the farmers came out to see them hunt, not to race.

For the last half-century the honourable and distinguished office of huntsman had been in the Buloc family, a race of honest well-to-do tillers of the soil, whose untarnished pedigree, for length and respectability at least, could give a very long start to that of many a titled family. Benjamin Buloc, the present custodian of the horn, was about as fine a sample of the British yeoman as it would be possible to imagine. Tipping the beam at 16 st., like his hounds and his famous horse Smiler, he was not adapted for steeplechasing over a country; but he knew much of the ways of foxes, had a genuine love of the sport, and his hounds loved him. In the eyes of his friends he was an ideal huntsman, cool-headed and careful, never hustling his hounds or worrying them with unnecessary help, but acting up to the motto originated by the first Buloc huntsman and handed down from father to son: 'Let 'em alone. They usually know best.' At five-and-thirty Benjamin Buloc, or, as he was familiarly known, 'Big Ben,' was still single, and likely to remain so; the ladies of the neighbourhood had long given him up as hopeless, and he came to be looked upon as a confirmed bachelor, if not even somewhat of a woman-hater.

Situated many miles from any important town, and five from the nearest railway, the Pudlington was seldom bothered by the presence of strangers; occasionally at a wide meet some members of the adjoining hunt, whose M.F.H. was an Earl and who thought themselves terribly superior, condescended to visit the 'Pudlington Poodles,' as they contemptuously termed the farmers' pack; but their presence was neither desired nor welcomed, and Big Ben was wont to give them the rough side of his tongue pretty freely if they over-rode his hounds or otherwise annoyed him.

Judge then of the excitement and curiosity created in this quiet neighbourhood when, just prior to the opening of the season, it became known that the old Grange, so long untenanted, had been purchased by the owner of half a dozen hunters. There could be no doubt concerning the truth of this, for after several huge vanloads of furniture came the animals in question, and moreover they might be seen any morning at exercise along the roads, attended by a very smart stud-groom, from whom, however, very little could be extracted concerning the new owner of the Grange. 'Yes, we've come to 'unt,' he admitted, adding, 'and I think our 'osses will be able to show you the road,' but nothing more could be got out of him, not even the name of his master or his reason for choosing Pudlington as a hunting centre. At a meeting of the hunt held at Ben's house the advent

of the stranger was fully discussed. The general feeling was one of welcome to a sportsman who intended to come and reside amongst them. As Ben put it, 'He's welcome enough to hunt with us so long as he behaves himself, but he mustn't interfere with our hounds, or be trying on any new-fangled ideas; ours is entirely a private pack, and we can let him come out or not as we choose.'

At the opening meet all were eager to see the stranger. It was known he had arrived the previous night, the fixtures had

'BIG BEN'

been intimated to the stud-groom—the Pudlington did not advertise—and so it was fairly certain that the unknown would appear. It might be thought that something in the way of a general smartening-up would have taken place as a compliment to the quality of the new-comer, but no—the Pudlington spirit declined to make the slightest alteration. The same old weather-beaten coats, the napless hats, the moleskins of many patches, the rusty bits and unclipped horses had been, and were still, good

enough for them, and if this gentleman failed to approve, the world was open to him. Moreover, it is a fact that Big Ben avoided wearing his new boots for fear it might look like affectation, but preferred to don the old ones, whose original leather had disappeared in a multitude of patches. This worthy sportsman, with his four couples of hounds and his ploughboy-groom Sam, who also acted as whipper-in, was first at the meeting place; he was soon joined by brother sportsmen, all with a hound or two trotting along behind their horses. As they arrived, the ever-increasing group of hounds met their canine friends with bristles and sterns erect and a smiling growl of welcome. 'Mornin'! mornin'!' cried the farmers one to the other. 'Ah, the old betch looks well!' 'That pup of Garge's promises capital!' 'Why, you've had the grey clipped!' 'They say the old customer is in the Willows again!' 'Has anybody seen the Grange swell?' so they laughed and talked, happy in the thought that their sport had really once more begun. At the height of the chatter, and just as Big Ben was about to move off with a 'I wait for no man,' somebody espied a rider cantering across country, taking a bee-line for the meet. Immediately all eyes were turned on the approaching figure, and everybody cried at once 'Here he comes!' For no member of the Pudlington ever rode to a meet in this fashion. '*Why, it's a woman!*' exclaimed Billy Cotton, who could view a fox farther than anybody else. 'Woman be d—d!' growled old Sam Short. 'Who ever saw a woman ride like that?' Ladies seldom graced the hunt with their presence; indeed, with the exception of the Parson's maiden sister (of uncertain age) who tittupted about on the one-eyed chaise pony, and young Butler's smart wife, who attended the meets because she wished to be thought modern, habits were conspicuous by their absence.

'Bless my life, but it *is* a woman, and Billy's right!' shouted Ben, as the horse and rider grew more plain. 'Well, I'm darned!' chorused the others. 'Look, she's coming at the big drop into my meadow!' exclaimed Tom Dingle. 'Stop her, she'll break her neck!' cried another.

The object of all this attention evidently knew what she was about, and so did her mount; they made nothing of the 'big drop,' and coming up at a sling canter across the intervening meadow, jumped the posts and rails into the road close to the group of riders, setting all the horses off snorting and plunging, and their riders woaing and jerking. 'Good morning!' cried the lady, with a comprehensive nod and a merry smile, as she reined in her

smoking thoroughbred. 'Hope you haven't waited for me. That fool of a man of mine put the wrong saddle on "Go Bang," or I should have had plenty of time.' Some of the younger men grinned a welcome and doffed their hats, but the older members, including Big Ben, were far too taken aback to do anything but stare open-mouthed—they had never seen anything like this before. Then, distinguishing the head of affairs as he sat amongst his hounds, she said, 'It was really very nice of you to

THE PARSON'S MAIDEN SISTER

have waited,' smiling sweetly. At this Big Ben found his tongue, and being very annoyed that this cheeky young person should take it on herself to imagine he had waited for her, gave the exceedingly rude answer, 'I wait for no man—much less for a woman!' and turning his horse moved off with the hounds. 'Well, that's hardly polite, is it!' she exclaimed to Billy Cotton as she followed with the others, and Billy agreed that Ben had not said the right thing; for be it known, the new comer was considerably above the average where looks are concerned, and

Billy, though very much married, was like most other men where beauty is concerned.

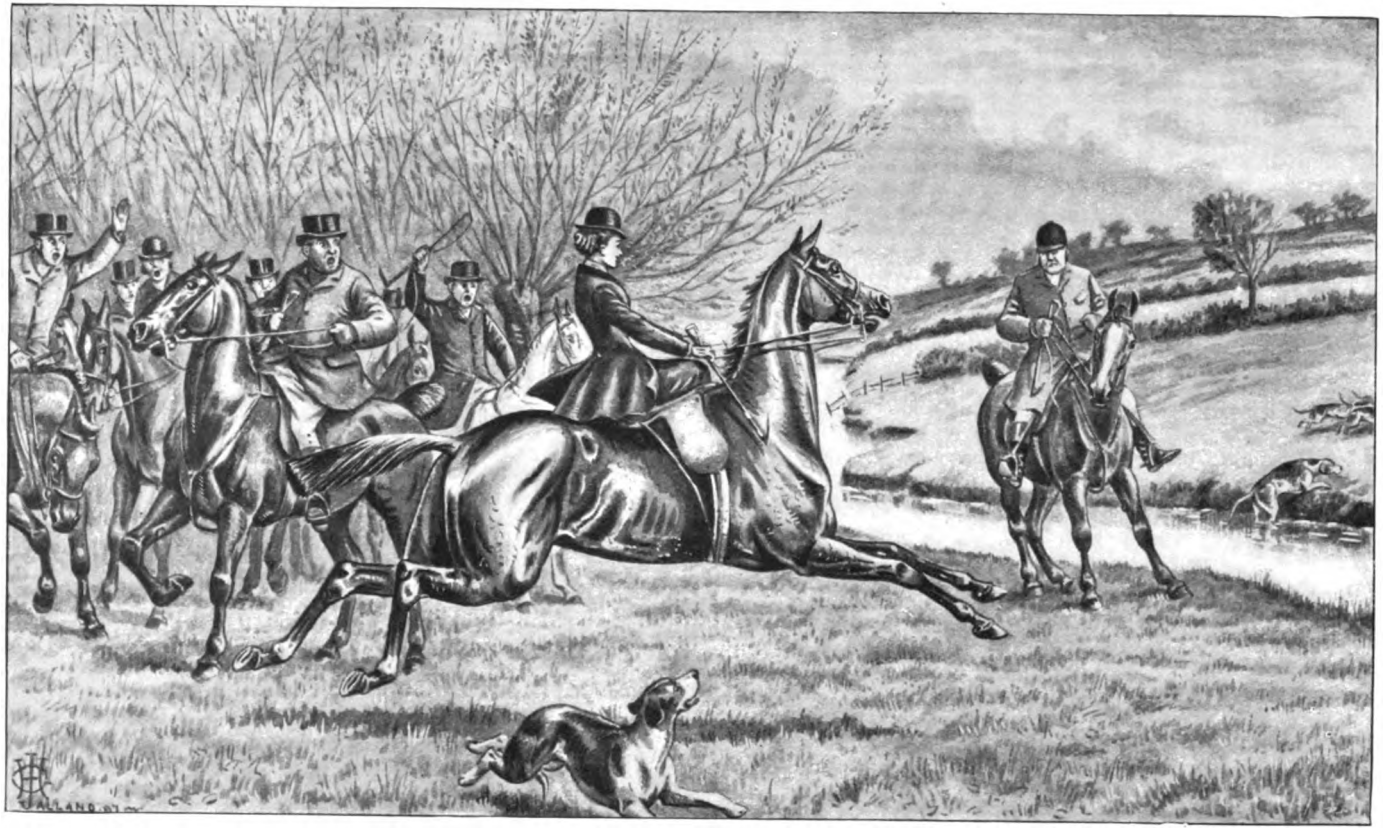
However, Ben's boorish snort had no effect on her lively disposition, and before a fox could be found she had chummed up with the majority of the field, old ones and young ones alike. She astonished them all not a little, for she was very much up-to-date--and they all lived a good five miles from a railway. But not one of them could resist her pretty chatter, and they all agreed she was 'a real nice lady,' her beauty beyond compare, and that Big Ben deserved a jolly good hiding.

Cover after cover was drawn blank until they came to Nelson's Willows. Here a fox was quickly on foot, the old customer who well knew what he was about, for he promptly put the Diffey, a stream of considerable proportions, between himself and his pursuers—he had done the same thing many times before, and knew exactly what would happen. The noisy pack would paddle slowly across after him, but Ben, their right hand, and the rest of the horsemen, would have to ride two miles down for the bridge; by the time they had found hounds he would have set them many puzzles to unravel, whilst he quietly made a détour back over the stream to the Willows and a convenient open drain.

Big Ben shook his fist at the red rascal as he viewed him impudently standing on the opposite bank calmly shaking the water out of his coat preparatory to setting off at a keep-it-up-all-day lope for the country beyond. 'Forrard away!' he screamed, capping his hounds across.

'Forrard away!' yelled Sam, cracking his whip. Splash! splash! went the hounds into the water, giving tongue lustily even as they swam.

Having seen them safely across and settled towling away on the line, our huntsman leisurely gathered up his reins and prepared to set out for the bridge, in which direction some of the field were already cantering and trotting away; but everyone turned in the saddle at Tom Dingle's cry of 'Stop, miss, stop for Heaven's sake! you'll be drooned!' The fair stranger was riding straight at the stream! 'War' horse!' she shouted, just missing a lagging hound. 'Do stand still, please!' This to Ben, who looked like crossing her. Heedless of the warning cries, for now everybody was yelling at her, on she came. With cocked ears and a determined stride the good horse charged the water, and taking off beautifully, landed with plenty to spare on the opposite bank. An 'Ah!' of relief came from every man, including Ben, at seeing her safe, and with a wave of her hand and a saucy smile



'DO STAND STILL, PLEASE'

to the astonished crowd, she set off in pursuit of the labouring pack. Of course nobody attempted to follow her. Jump the Diffey! Why they would as soon have contemplated riding at the North Sea.

Now, whilst Ben and the others are making their way round by the bridge, a good opportunity presents itself to introduce this adventurous fair one to the reader. The daughter of a large horse-dealing farmer in Leicestershire, and brought up amongst horses and dogs, Mrs. Malton was a sportswoman to the back-bone. She had hunted from early childhood, and when, at the age of twenty, she pounded Freddy Malton, the only son of a millionaire brewer, with the Quorn, that enraptured youth forthwith determined to win her for his bride. In this he succeeded, only to break his neck five seasons later when following the lead of his fair charmer. So, at the age of six-and-twenty, she found herself a widow with a considerable income at her disposal. Naturally she became the object of numerous fortune-hunting captains and penniless younger sons, but she would have none of them; she lived entirely for sport, and her great object in life was to hunt a pack of hounds herself. But alas! this ambition seemed unattainable. In vain she applied for all vacant masterships. The strongly rooted prejudice of Englishmen barred her way. True, one out-of-the-way hunt, whose pecuniary position was indifferent, would have taken her; but when it became known that she intended to be her own huntsman, they cried off, fearing ridicule. Chagrined by repeated failures to obtain her cherished desire, annoyed by the chaff it entailed, and worried by the attentions of obnoxious men, she at last determined to retire to a part of the country where she was unknown; with this intent she fixed on Pudlington, and secured the Grange for her new home. Had she understood that the hunt was such an exceedingly primitive one, possibly she might not have come, but now she was there she meant to stay the season out, at any rate.

The lady having been presented, we must hark back to our friends Big Ben and the others, whom we left making their way to the bridge. This they crossed, and proceeded to hunt for the hounds. As a rule it was quite a simple matter, for the pack would not move an inch unless they were quite positive, and their noisy clamour could be heard for miles. But on this occasion, when Ben had arrived in the vicinity of where he expected they would be, nothing could be seen or heard of them. Puzzled to imagine what had happened, he set off towards Oaklands, a big wood the fox usually ran through, and soon he passed a ploughman

at work, who confirmed his surmise, and further informed him hounds had been gone half an hour or more, accompanied by a 'lass.'

Poor Ben and his friends, how they cursed and spurred, as, guided by yokels and footmarks, they travelled mile after mile in vain pursuit! The day was growing old when at last they espied the missing pack coming over a rise, with the lady jogging along in their midst. When they met, and before Ben could get out a word, she began 'I *am* glad I've found you—don't believe I should ever have got home by myself. Had a most rippin' hunt, two hours and fifty-five minutes. Rather tough work though, being

AND THEN THEY ALL LAUGHED

huntsman and whip at the same time! Hounds want sharpening up badly, but they are wonders to hunt. Lifted 'em twice and saved 'em miles the last time; saw the rascal coming back, and we cut off a big corner ["Lifted 'em!" groaned Ben]. I say, what's the name of that little tan? she's the pick of the lot; coursed him by herself for a couple of fields, and half finished him before the others got up.' 'What!' shouted the astonished Ben, 'they haven't killed him?'

'Rather; and here's his brush—it's all I could save,' laughed the lady, pulling the draggled trophy from her pocket and holding it up before the eyes of the dumbfoundered crowd. '*Ger*rusalem!' was all Ben could say. Here was a female who had run away

with his hounds and, unaided, killed the famous fox of Nelson's Willows! Anger at her audacity, admiration of her achievement, and jealousy of her prowess (luck, he called it), battled for the mastery. He must assert his position, maintain his authority, and bundle this impertinent hussy out of his country; but she looked so charming sitting there, her cheeks flushed and her lovely eyes all a-sparkle with excitement and fun, that really he hardly quite knew how to begin; besides, she had praised the pride of his life, the little tan bitch 'Barmaid.' But the expectant crowd must not think him afraid of a woman—he must say something. 'Look here, Miss What's-your-name. I don't care who you are or where you come from, but if you think you are going to ride roughshod over me you are vastly mistaken. These hounds——' 'Excuse me for interrupting you,' broke in the lady, 'but my name is Lilly Malton, and I *do* hope you are not going to say rude things. I'm most awfully sorry you all missed the run, but really it was not my fault, you know, was it?' and she smiled more sweetly than ever.

Ben felt himself a terrible bear, and his anger died away in a mumble about 'Lifting my hounds, indeed! a thing I don't do myself six times in a season.' The fair one smiled on, and to turn the conversation asked him where he should draw next? 'Draw!' exclaimed Ben, regarding his tired hounds, 'they don't look much like doing any more to-day, but (sarcastically) possibly *you* might kill another with 'em before dark.' 'Yes, very possibly I might!' cheerfully responded the other, quite unabashed; and then they all laughed together.

During the long ride home Mrs. Malton chatted first with one and then with the other, but most frequently she was jogging with Ben amongst the hounds, describing every turn and incident of the run so far as her recollection of the country enabled her, or pointing out the different hounds that had specially distinguished themselves, and learning their names. Then she commented on Smiler's make and shape, greatly to Ben's delight, for nothing pleases a man more than admiration of his horse. She declared herself charmed with the country, with its long stretches of undulating sound old pasture and its almost total absence of wire. She soon gathered that Ben was unattached, and contrived to let fall that she was a widow. Long before home was reached he had apologised handsomely for his rudeness in the morning, and in return had been very prettily forgiven. Never before had Lilly Malton made so complete and easy a conquest. 'Look here, Sam,' he said as he dismounted in his stable-yard, 'Smiler

won't go to plough again just yet, and he'll be all the better for another half-peck a day.' Later, as he contemplated his ancient, stained and faded scarlet coat airing before the fire, he murmured, 'Five seasons or six, is it? Getting shocking shabby when you

'I'LL STAY, BEN, ON ONE CONDITION'

see it in a good light. Really I must drive over to-morrow and see Hodson about a new one.'

Curious to relate, this same feeling that their wardrobes required attention seemed general with the Pudlington, for within a fortnight every man Jack of them wore new hats, coats, boots,

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or something; moreover, there was hardly an unclipped horse to be seen, and the village saddler ran out of bright bits and fancy brow-bands. Truth to tell, all the single men and most of the married ones had been wounded by the arrows which flew so plentifully from the fair Lilly's ready bow. Of course, the local ladies said nasty things, but that had very little effect on the men. It seldom has.

Never a meet but Mrs. Malton was present; more often than not she rode alongside Ben when hounds were drawing; she knew them all by name the second time out, and they in turn never forgot how she had helped them with the Willows fox. Her knowledge astonished Ben. The distant flocks of flurried sheep, the hovering groups of baiting crows, the conscience-stricken shepherd's cur, each told their tale to her; and it became an acknowledged fact that she could view a travelling fox much further distant than even Billy Cotton. After a time Ben began to think she knew nearly as much about hunting, and rather more about fox-killing, than he did; for though at first he acted on her suggestions more with the idea of pleasing her, he found she was far more often right than wrong; and there is no doubt that about this time the Pudlington began to kill foxes with merciless regularity. It was wonderful also to observe the spirit of emulation which gradually possessed the erstwhile sober field. No longer did they potter along through gates and gaps; they took to jumping the fences as they came—the younger spirits even began to ride one against the other. Big Ben himself became a regular bruiser, and, what with freedom from the plough chains and the extra corn, old Smiler actually took to pulling at his fences.

On non-hunting days Mrs. Malton often went a-farming with Ben. She criticised the stock, of which she was really an excellent judge, and could guess the weight of a fat bullock or wether to a nicety; or with dogs and ferrets they would spend a morning amongst the banks after rabbits. Occasionally after these excursions she lunched at the farm, and though Ben's housekeeper, a prim old dame, at first regarded his companion with anything but pleasant looks, after a time all her most cunning cookery and tasty recipes were brought into play when a visit from the 'Grange Lady' was expected; moreover, the scandalmonger who dared to say a word against her had to reckon with a tongue second to none in the county. But of course the neighbours talked. Anyone with half an eye could see how things were going, and so, to make the story shorter, we

will skip a few months of merry gallops, when the absence of frost made the season a memorable one throughout the country.

On a certain afternoon in late February, as twilight was fast merging into darkness, Ben rode homewards amongst the weary hounds, with Mrs. Malton, his now constant companion, by his side. During the day a brace had been killed after rattling runs, and the two chatted as they rode, recounting their versions of the day's fortunes with infinite detail, one supplying what the other missed, until every inch of the ground had been gone over again. 'Ah,' sighed the fair one, 'to think this sweet season is

MRS. BULOC HAD THE OPENING DAY

so nearly over, and that I shall soon—er—be going away' (I don't believe for a moment she had any such intention, but no matter). 'Going away!' echoed Ben hoarsely, giving a great plunge in the saddle that made Smiler grunt again. With his heart banging against his ribs and his lips all a-tremble he blurted it out, but to this day he cannot recollect a single word he said, nor does he remember how it came about that their horses were standing still and he found himself in imminent danger of falling off and dragging his fair companion with him. The latter, however, kept her head and her seat. 'I'll stay, Ben, on one condition,' she answered, fondling the honest face so near her own. 'And it is

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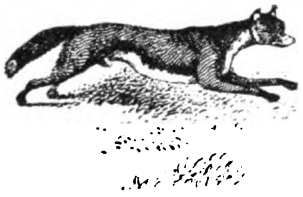
this. We must hunt four days a week, and take it in turns to carry the horn.' Of course Ben promised everything and anything—men always will on these occasions—but it never occurred to him to think where the extra hounds could come from or how they were to be maintained. So let us leave them exchanging sweet confidences amongst the delayed and somewhat disgusted pack.

It only remains to be added that within six months an army of builders had erected a long range of stabling, and the most modern of modern foxhounds' kennels, in a paddock adjoining the enlarged and vastly improved Grange. No longer were the farmers' wives bothered by thieving foxhounds about their kitchens, nor their husbands' banking accounts depleted by subscriptions. Many hounds were added and (whisper it) many drafted (or buried), and when they took the field the following November nobody would have recognised in the perfectly appointed huntsman (or rather huntswoman, for naturally Mrs. Buloc had the opening day) the once despised Pudlington Poodles.



HARROW CRICKET

BY HORACE HUTCHINSON

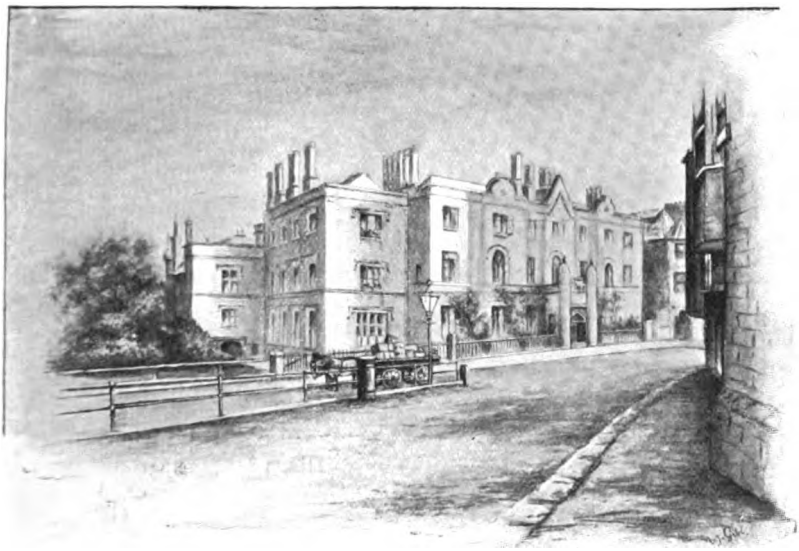
For the early history of cricket at Harrow, as for most other features of life at the famous school on the Hill, the authority *par excellence* is Mr. Percy M. Thornton's 'Harrow School and its Surroundings.' By the liberal courtesy of its author one is permitted to borrow with a rapacity which I could only wish more wholesale from its pleasant pages. But to transcribe all that he has to say of interest would be to transgress fixed limits, and, moreover, it needs to go further down the years of the nineteenth century than he conducts us.

Cricket at Harrow School may be said to have begun when first the school had access to a cricket ground. Before this we have the usual legends of the playing of hand-ball, hand in and hand out, and all the kindred pastimes to which the soul of boyhood is certain to addict itself when once a ball and a bit of stick fall into its possession. And what relation these games may bear to the cricket that we know now might be an interesting inquiry enough were there any means at hand for determining it. But in the absence of the means the discussion would be mere brick-making without straw, and would not advance the cause of cricket history.

In 1746 there came to Harrow as headmaster Dr. Thomas Thackeray, 'who avowedly ruled Harrow on principles learnt under the shadow of Windsor Castle.' Mr. Thornton, reasonably enough, infers that, together with the principles of acquiring knowledge as taught at Eton, Dr. Thackeray may have introduced the Eton pastimes also, and this view is reinforced by the

coincidence that exactly at the same date the purchase was effected of a playground for the boys. And since cricket was in vogue at Eton, as witness the letters of Horace Walpole, as early as 1730, it is more than probable that cricket would have taken a principal part in the pastimes imported to the new Harrow playground.

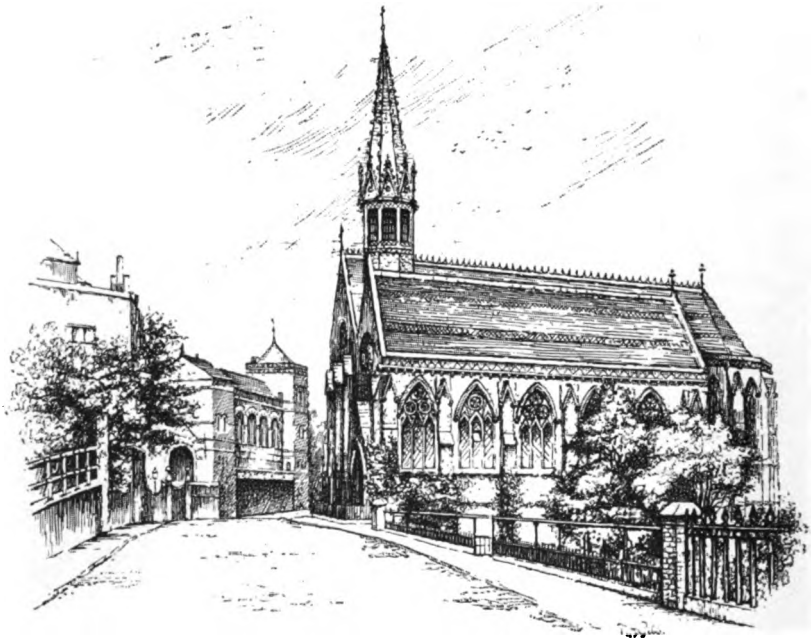
For some while, however, Harrow cricket seems to have made but little noise in the world. There is subsidiary evidence of its existence, for Mr. Thornton tells us that when 'Dr. Parr seceded to Stanmore (1771), his scholars, who were nearly all Harrovians, secured the Duke of Chandos' bowling-green for the purpose of



HEADMASTER'S HOUSE, HARROW

cricket.' Among the many invaluable cricketing records which perished in the burning of the old Lord's pavilion, there are said to be the scores of the matches played, at irregular intervals, in the beginning of the nineteenth century between Harrow and Eton; and Mr. Thornton rightly points to the fact that no duplicates of the scores were preserved at either school as showing how very slight must have been the interest excited by these contests. The earliest score on record is dated August 2, 1805, but it seems to have been rather a scratch affair, Lord Byron taking part in it and scoring nine in the two innings and bowling a wicket. One of the members of the team said that it was not representative, and instanced Lord Byron's playing in support of

that view; but he only established his right to the character of critic to the extent of making 'specs.' himself, and it is not noted that he bowled anybody. The first really representative match of which the score has come down to us was played in 1818, and won by Harrow by thirteen runs. Even at this early date it appears that the school gained some advantage from being so near London, certain old Harrovians of the day revisiting the school from time to time and bringing down with them the correctest and most up-to-date principles of cricket from



CHAPEL AND SPEECH ROOM, HARROW

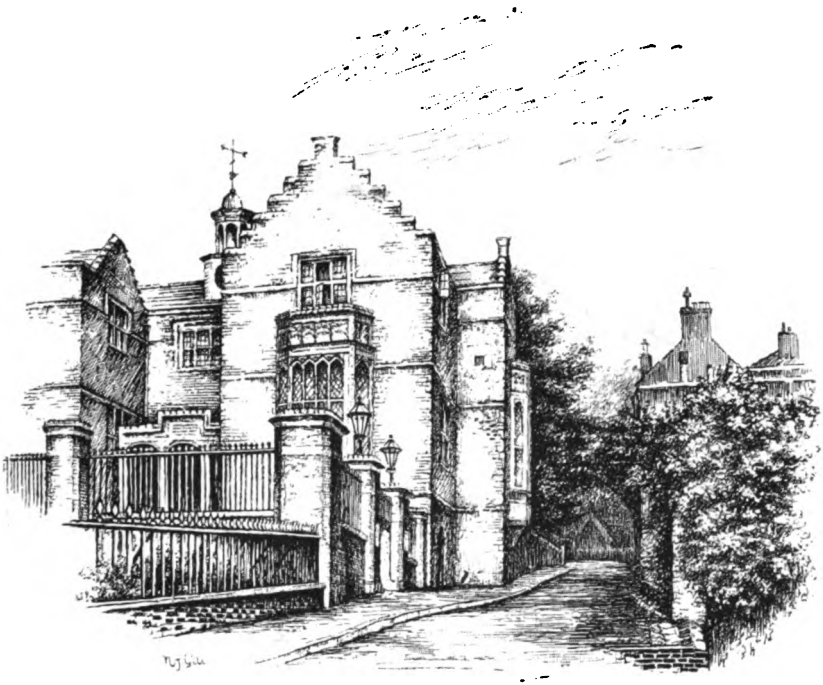
the Artillery Fields or Lord's, even as the late Hon. R. Grimston gave his devoted services in the years that followed.

Eton, on the whole, had the better of the school contests in the early days. Nevertheless Mr. Thornton instances the year 1823 as memorable in that Harrow beat Eton at Lord's, and an eleven of old Harrovians at Oxford beat the University, on the Bullingdon ground, in a single innings.

The year 1828 is a notable one in the annals of Harrow cricket, and as great epochs generally find their impersonation in some one great man, so the personification of this great era is Mr. Harenc, the famous slow bowler of Kent. In 1828 he was

at Harrow, and captain of the eleven. Mr. Bolland quotes Lillywhite as saying of him: 'I bowls the best ball in England, and Mr. Harenc the second.' To possess the second best bowler in England for their captain was enough to put the seal of great achievement on the cricket of the school.

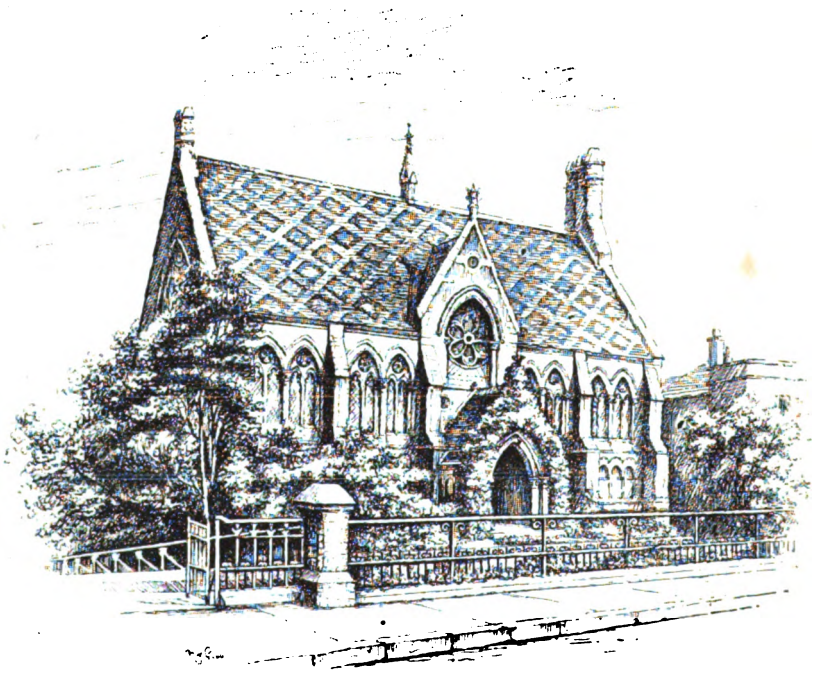
And straightforward, from that date onward, there has been in the cricket of Harrow, if not an absolute uniformity of high-class execution (though even in this respect Harrow cricket has been singularly consistent), at all events a continuity of the best



HARROW OLD SCHOOL

spirit and tradition. The game has been played in an enthusiastic and persevering fashion, both by those who attained the honour of a place in the eleven, and by those who had to be content with a smaller share of glory. From the time of Mr. Harenc's captaincy, when Lord Verulam and the Hon. Edward Grimston were among his subalterns, there has been a succession of such names as Ponsonby, Grimston, Nicholson, Haygarth, Hankey, and so on down to the more modern years of the Walkers, Buller, the Langs, Hadow, Webbe, Kemp, and many more, all of them household words throughout cricket-loving England.

Like all the good things of this life, Harrow cricket was not achieved without hard fighting. We have seen that in the time of Dr. Thackeray—that is, about the middle of the eighteenth century—a playground was given the school; but this was, no doubt, inadequate to growing cricketing needs, and in 1803 an Act of Parliament was passed permitting the enclosure of a piece of Roxteth Common. The townsfolk hotly resented this invasion of their rights, and frequently interfered with the boys as they pitched the wickets. Pitched battles, too, between the



THE LIBRARY, HARROW

big boys and the roughs resulted, and it seems to have been some years—Mr. Thornton, indeed, says fifty—before the commoners allowed the cricket to be pursued in peace.

Even after the boys had established their right to a peaceable tenancy of this little bit of the globe, there remained some fighting to be done with the unfriendly forces of nature before a clay soil of the consistency that, as the old Scotch lady said, 'girns a' simmer an' greets a' winter,' could be brought into proper condition for a good wicket. And even still, as many a cricketer can testify, it is a treacherous and deceitful soil, which

a ray too much of sun will cake or an extra splash of rain will sodden. It is by dint of combating such difficulties, creating a fine wicket out of discouraging material, and batting where the batsman's life is not all smooth and easy, that the fine qualities of Harrow cricket have been evolved. If there are styles of batting more taking to the eye, there is none that bears the stamp of safer and more correct play, none, perhaps, that is so likely to impart a fair measure of efficiency to all the members of a team, and none that is so well qualified for serving a man through many years of cricketing life, after the first clearness of eye and vigour of muscle have left him. There are all the sterling qualities of good batting about it, with none of the delusive flashiness which too often goes with the crooked bat. For a boy at the beginning of his cricketing career there is no other style on which we should prefer to see him model himself; and, no doubt, it was with a full appreciation of its merits, as well as of certain of its limitations, that it was fostered in the Harrow boys by their beloved 'Bob' Grimston. The whole genius and spirit of Harrow cricket seems to have been so bound up in his kindly personality, that it is scarcely possible to pen a paragraph without the introduction of his name. It needs no apology for the quotation of the touching lines penned on his death in 1884 by Mr. E. E. Bowen; but there is this to say, by way of preface to them: the ideal of the good man, the good cricketer, in its best sense, the fine, kindly, genial English gentleman, is so well expressed in their appreciation of their subject that one seems here to be reading, not merely the sentiments of Harrow towards her lost friend, not the address of a school or any single corporate body towards a mentor taken away from it, but the lament of the whole younger generation of cricketers over the grave of one who has fulfilled, in an astonishing measure, the *rôle* of guide, philosopher, and friend.

R. G.

Still the balls ring upon the sunlit grass,
  Still the big elms, deep shadowed, watch the play;
And ordered game and loyal conflict pass
  The hours of May.

But the game's guardian, mute, nor heeding more
  What suns may gladden, and what airs may blow,
Friend, teacher, playmate, helper, counsellor,
  Lies resting now.

'Over'—they move, as bids their fieldsman's art;
With shifted scene the strife begins anew;
'Over'—we seem to hear him, but his part
Is over, too.

Dull the best speed, and vain the surest grace—
So seemed it ever—till there moved along
Brimmed hat, and cheering presence, and tried face
Amid the throng.

He swayed his realm of grass, and planned, and wrought;
Warned rash intruders from the tended sward;
A workman, deeming, for the friends he taught,
No service hard.

He found, behind first failure, more success;
Cheered stout endeavour more than languid skill;
And ruled the heart of boyhood with the stress
Of helpful will.

Or, standing at our hard-fought game, would look,
Silent and patient, drowned in hope and fear,
Till the lips quivered, and the strong voice shook
With low glad cheer.

Well played! His life was honester than ours;
We scheme, he worked; we hesitate, he spoke;
His rough-hewn stem held no concealing flowers,
But grain of oak.

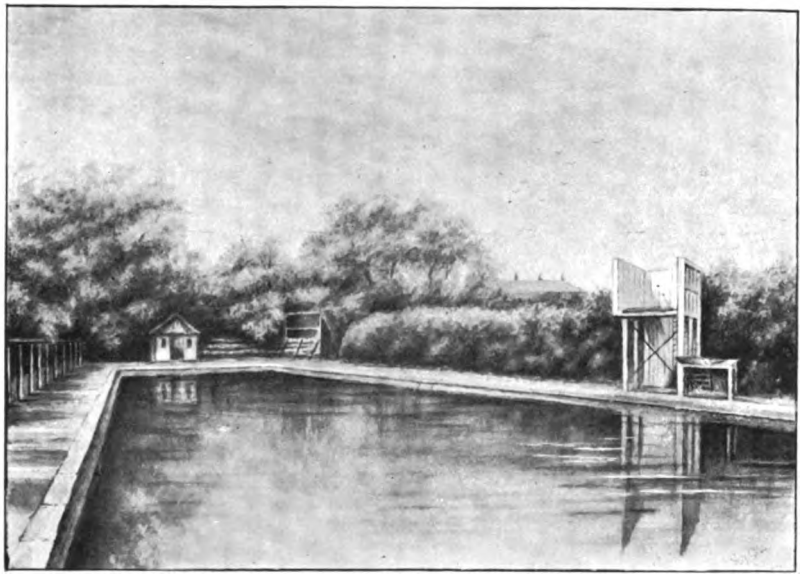
No earthly umpire speaks his grave above;
And thanks are dumb, and praise is all too late;
That worth and truth, that manhood and that love,
Are hid, and wait.

Sleep gently where thou sleepest, dear old friend;
Think, if thou thinkest, on the bright days past;
Yet loftier Love, and worthier Truth attend
What more thou hast!

Finest of all the features that this fine appreciation exhibits is perhaps that finding 'behind first failure, more success,' and that cheering of 'stout endeavour more than languid skill.' That dogged pluck and the enthusiasm for the game expressed by the 'drowned in hope and fear, till the lips quivered and the strong voice shook,' over the changes and chances of the match are the legacy with which he has endowed Harrow cricket in perpetual fee. We say 'in perpetual fee,' for even if the traditions be obliterated, so that the very name, if that were possible, of Robert Grimston should be forgotten, the effect of his genial

kindness and sympathetic influence can never be effaced. So eager was his excitement when the school met Eton at Lord's—only equalled by Mr. Mitchell's in the opposite cause—that he was not able to sit and watch the contest, but would retire somewhere into the country until a telegram told him the worst or the best.

Mr. Thornton, in the course of his pleasant chapter on the school cricket, quotes some comments by a critic who prefers to be nameless, though his criticisms bear internal evidence of their value. The substance of them consists in a comparison of the



SWIMMING BATH, HARROW

past and present cricket at Harrow. In batting there, as elsewhere, the improvement he notes to be general—not so much in the play of chosen individuals as in the rank and file of the teams; there were giants in the earth even in the old days. But in bowling and fielding the writer is not able to note an equal, or even any, progress. He says further that this state of things in the school history accurately reflects the cricket history of the bigger world outside it. The bowling, he says, has made no advances; the fielding has even degenerated. He may be right. These comparative conclusions are hard, very hard, to substantiate. It is always to be remembered that the heroes of our hero-worshipping days are not seen quite in the true perspective. On the other

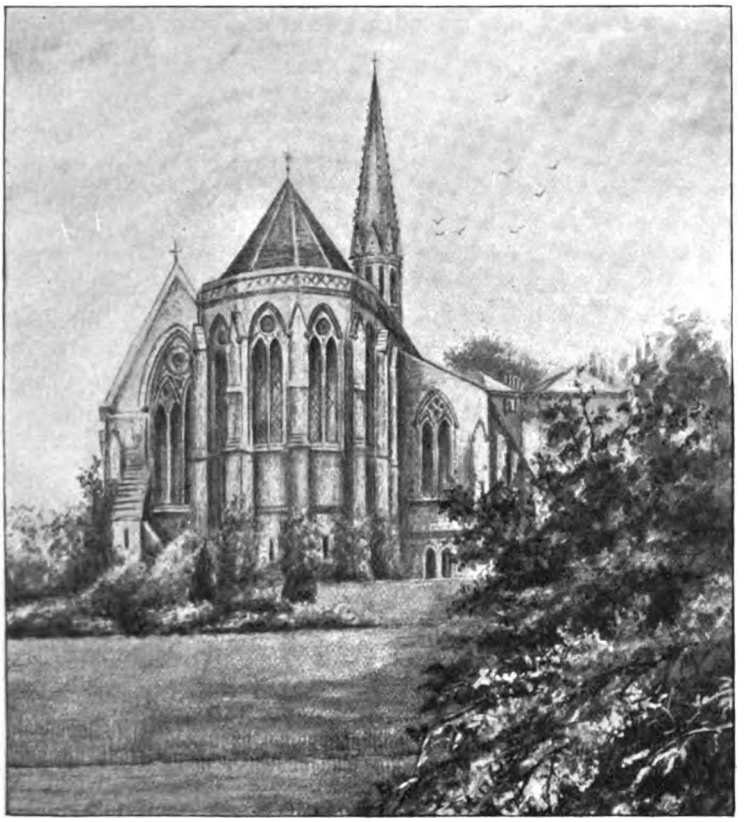
hand, it is not impossible that both in bowling and in fielding we may have made an advance again since the day when these words were written; we have been smartened up by some drastic processes of polishing at the hands of our Australian brethren—of Spofforth, Blackham, and the rest. So it may be that this old critic was just enough when he wrote, but that we of later time, taking advantage of good examples that have been set before us, have bettered ourselves out of danger of his censure.

Mr. Thornton, however, while tacitly admitting the righteousness of this judgment on the bowling, cannot allow the strictures on the fielding to pass without challenge. Of later years again we have seen such remarkable brilliancy from Harrow in the field, shown by the quick hands of Mr. Vibart, that it became almost the feature of the match. Certainly the great bowlers that have been Harrovians are not many. The name of Mr. F. C. Cobden still stands highest, mounted inassailably on that pinnacle of extraordinary achievement in the 'Varsity match. No wonder the small Harrow boy, when asked whether his hero was a relative of 'the great Cobden,' replied with indignation, 'he *is* the great Cobden!' One would think so, indeed. Of course there was Mr. Harenc; but this is rather ancient history. Of bats, though others have perhaps done more sterling work, there is none whose style has ever excelled Mr. Buller's, of all who have come after him. Of underhand bowlers none surely—not even Mr. F. Mitchell at Eton in its later years—was ever so useful, since underhand became the exception rather than the rule, as Mr. W. B. Money. In his time at Harrow the school won a remarkable succession of victories over Eton, winning by an innings and many runs to spare in 1864, 1865, and 1866. It was about this time that Eton cricket grew singularly strong, under the coaching of Mr. R. A. H. Mitchell, and with such men in the team as Mr. George Longman, Mr. A. S. Tabor, Hon. George (now Lord) Harris, Mr. A. B. Ridley, and a good succession of Lytteltons, culminating in the excellent wicket-keeping and captaincy of the Hon. Alfred Lyttelton. The match was drawn in 1867. In the two years that followed the Dark Blues suffered severe defeat, and again in 1870 had to confess themselves beaten, though the fight was very even.

Subsequently, for a while, Mr. Thornton is reluctantly obliged to admit a deterioration in Harrow cricket, a slackness in the field—first and unmistakable signal of general demoralisation—and especially an unsteadiness in defence. But this was for a while only, and at the present moment of writing the cricket of

Harrow School, so far as the writer is a qualified judge, has regained its old earnestness and strenuous endeavour crowned with such measure of success as it is in boys to command.

It would be a great mistake to estimate the influence of Harrow School on cricket by what is done in the school alone. Through the captaincy of the Middlesex County team by Mr. I. D. Walker, and, in succession to him, by Mr. A. J. Webbe, we

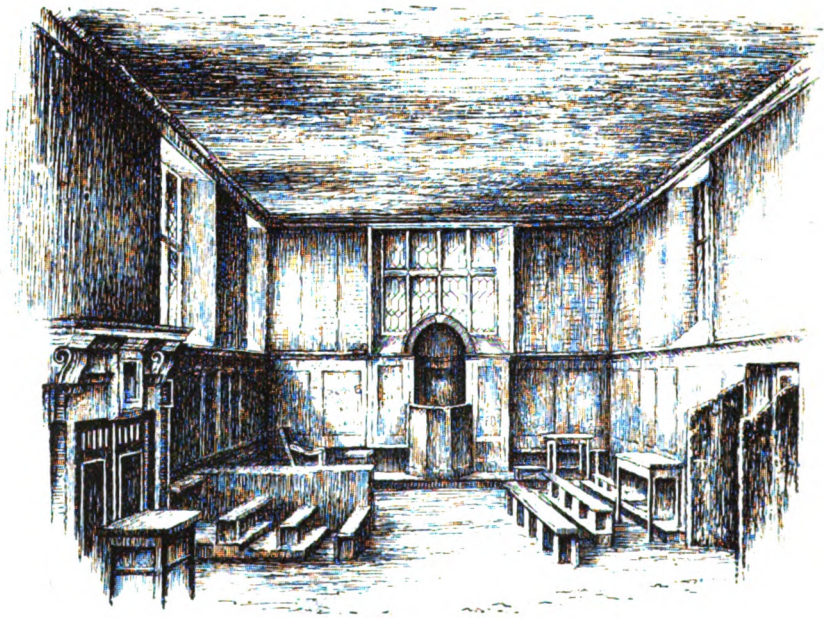


THE CHAPEL

have grown so accustomed to see the Harrow influence predominating at headquarters—that is to say, at Lord's—that we have almost begun to regard it as part of a naturally established order. Yet really, of course, it is rather in the nature of coincidence. But, however resulting, the effect is to bring into the wider world of cricket that very excellent spirit learned on the Hill and fostered by the precepts and example of such men as

Lord Bessborough, Lord Verulam, and others of the Ponsonbys and Grimstons.

A very pleasant feature of Harrow cricket, and one which it owes to its proximity to London among other favouring circumstances, is the establishment of that Old Harrovian Club whose rooms stand overlooking the Harrow cricket ground. It affords an inducement, which very many are ready to take advantage of, for a visit of 'old boys' to the scene of their past pleasures and struggles, and so maintains that continuity of sentiment and tradition which is the base of the peculiar *esprit de corps* among



FOURTH FORM ROOM, HARROW

Harrovians. Mr. Thornton, in commenting on the Harrow Wanderers' teams and matches, has a suggestion for the further fostering and strengthening of this spirit by uniting with the members of an older generation some picked members of the school eleven of the year to go on the wandering tours. I believe, however, that his suggestion has never been carried into effect, except on chance occasions, when the team happened to be short and a useful member of the school eleven handy. The success of the Wanderers' team is not least due to Mr. Thornton himself, for he has for many years given it his services as its honorary secretary.

THE BOGUS CHAMPION

BY REX RAY

THERE are fascinations about our links which I have found on no others. The difficult natural bunkers, the sandy lies, and the fine long stretches have no equal on the map of England. Where, I ask, in all the world will you find a brook like ours, so admirably calculated to run where the player least expects and far less desires it should, so exquisite in its own peculiar beauty, and so capricious in its rise and fall? Where also on the face of the universe, unless it be on some far-off prairie, will you find a stretch so long, so flat, and yet so varying as our last hole? Many a man have I seen come to grief at that. Men from Scotland with peculiar infallible clubs, men from Cornwall with home-made ditto, and men from abroad accustomed to play under all conditions of clime have tried from time to time—even professionals themselves; and all have failed. Yet Bogie does the hole in six. At least, so he says.

It was this I explained to my friend Cobb, on the first day of the holidays, as we journeyed down from town in a comfortable smoking carriage discussing the prospects of a golfing fortnight. The weather was so perfect, the rivalry between us so keen, and the subject so entertaining, that the monotonous old four hours' ride at which I had so often complained seemed on this occasion to pass away almost before it had begun.

No sooner had we reached the little wayside station that I always consider the most convenient point for alighting than we found the trap ready waiting, and were soon dashing along the old narrow road leading to the club, as gaily as though there had been no dust. By the time we arrived it was already dusk, so we agreed to dine as soon as possible and postpone our survey of the links till the following morning. There were several other members already down, and I took the opportunity of introducing my friend. Throughout the whole of dinner and after, when coffee was served and cigars were lighted, we found ourselves still discussing the game and arranging singles and foursomes for several days ahead. At one o'clock sharp, however, we all turned in with the fixed determination of being up with the sun and doing a round before breakfast.

It seemed to me that I had hardly been asleep a quarter of an hour when I awoke with a start, being conscious of someone moving about in my room.

'Who's that?' I demanded, raising myself up on my elbow.

'Only Cobb,' came the reply, and the glow of a cigarette showed me that he was still in his pyjamas.

'What's up?' said I, striking a match and lighting the candle by the bedside.

'Are you sure a chap can't drive that fourth hole?'

'Quite sure. You'll just land in the brook. It's two hundred and thirty yards.'

'Oh, is it? Sorry I woke you up, old chap. Good-night.'

I swore a little to myself as soon as he was gone, blew out the light, and turned over once more to sleep. But the effect of having been once awakened was to prevent me from going off again. For fully an hour I must have lain there doing my best to turn my thoughts into some other channel, but ever returning to the same old subject—Golf! Golf! Golf!

It was whilst I was lying thus that I heard the handle of my door turn, saw it open a few inches, and observed somebody's head emerge slowly through the chink.

'Are you awake?' came a whisper a moment afterwards, and I recognised the voice of my friend Cobb.

'Yes.'

'I should think with a couple of good brassey shots one ought to do that last hole of yours in six?'

'What a fellow you are! Why can't you let a man sleep?' I replied.

'Sorry, old chap, I won't disturb you any more; but it seems

WE SETTLED DOWN AT FULL LENGTH ON THE SAND AND STRAINED OUR EYES ACROSS THE LINKS

to me if one only managed to get in a decent drive and a couple of long brassey shots, provided the lies were good, it ought to be a six-hole right enough.'

I lit the candle once more.

'Do you know it's two o'clock?'

'Oh, is it?' he answered unconcernedly. 'I wish it was seven. I can't sleep a wink. The fact is, I want to go and have a look at those links.'

I stared at him in amazement. He was mad; or if he were not mad, he was at least restless and feverish. He paced up and down the room—my room—at midnight, smoking one cigarette after another at an incredible rate, and asking all sorts of questions about the game. Poor fellow! The fever was on him. Neither his brains nor his legs would rest that night. I saw this at once. The only thing to do was to humour him.

'Would you like to go out now?' I asked, not dreaming for a moment that he would comply.

'Rather! I should just think I would!' he replied to my great dismay, and before I could say anything more he was off to his room to change.

There was nothing for it but to get up, and as I was apparently not missing any sleep myself by doing so, I at once began to dress.

Half an hour later the two of us were walking gaily in the moonlight towards the nearest hole, letting our chatter run without restriction.

Our new red flags were up beside the holes, evidently left there by some thoughtless caddy; but it was a beautiful night, warm and dry, so they could suffer little harm from the exposure. This I noticed as we neared the last mound, from which I calculated to disclose the links.

We were on the point of crossing this when, with the sudden impulse which is bred by fear, we grasped instinctively one another's arms and sank slowly down together upon the sand. If I am a coward as well as a boaster, it was then for the first time I discovered it. I tried to speak, and failed. I turned to Cobb. It was some satisfaction to me to notice that he was in the same plight, with a face as white as any tablecloth. His lips were quivering, and I noticed that he, too, wished to say something, but could not. For fully a minute we must have remained thus. Finally Cobb recovered himself.

'What is it?' he gasped, raising himself on his hands and peering over the top of the bank.

'It's—Bogie!' I replied, scarcely believing my own words.

'By Jove! so it is,' said he, with such confidence that I no longer doubted. 'Let's watch him.'

I thoroughly approved of this suggestion, so we settled down at full length on the sand and strained our eyes across the links. Poor old Cobb! From that moment he was another fellow. The thought that he of all the thousands of golfers on the face of this earth should be the one to discover the champion on his round was almost too much for him. The colour returned to his face now, bringing with it an almost fierce look of pleasure. So great was the reaction of his excitement that it took me all my time to keep him from running out of our hiding-place.

In the meantime a weird spectral figure approached the last hole but one. Behind him, before him, and all around him in fact, quick as a flash in every movement, rushed his caddy, bearing a dozen or more clubs as easily as if they had no greater weight than his own conscience. There, then, was the mystic creature of whom we had so often heard! Of the two strange beings, surely he was by far the stranger. Broad was he and loud, with a tongue vicious and repulsive, lying ever over the side of his mouth. We cared little for the looks of him.

'Two strokes,' we heard him say in the distance, the breeze bearing his words down to us as plainly as though we had been in conversation, and then a word which seemed like 'jam' quickly followed from the mouth of Bogie. Cobb looked at me, and I at him. We both smiled simultaneously.

'Even among spectres!' he remarked.

'Yes,' I replied. 'Poor devil! he's in the brook.'

Now, taking the ball out of the brook meant losing one stroke, so having already made two shots, he would have to do a very extraordinary one to get the hole in four, which was in accordance with his accomplishments on our club cards. This I explained to Cobb.

We watched him take it out and drop it over his shoulder. After some deliberation in the choosing of a suitable club he struck. It was a fine shot, judging from the good clear ringing sound and general attitude of the player. We were unable to make out the ball at that distance in spite of the brilliant moon, but it irritated me to see that little caddy dash forward after it and arrive at the hole presumably at the same time.

'Four!' came a voice across the links a moment afterwards, and we stared at one another again in bewilderment.

THERE SHOT FROM THE MOUTH OF THIS EXTRAORDINARY CREATURE THAT TONGUE

'By Jove! What a fluke!' burst out Cobb, unable to contain himself any longer.

'For heaven's sake keep still, man,' I said, holding him down by the arm; 'you will spoil all our fun if you don't keep quiet. Don't you see this is the last hole in front here, and they're just going to finish? I'm bound to say I don't believe that last.'

'Wish I had some glasses,' he continued, as we settled down again into a breathless silence.

The last hole being a very long one, it was clear that Bogie would require fully the two good brassey shots mentioned by Cobb, after a decent drive, to come anywhere near the hole at all; and then it was ten to one he would find himself nicely embedded in the sand. Four strokes we watched; one with the driver and three with the iron. Good ones they were, too, from the style; but evidently his luck and his lies were bad, for he covered little more than half the distance. Moreover, his last stroke had landed him securely in a rut, and I, who have tramped those links about as many times in the year as most men tramp backwards and forwards to their offices, know the depth of those ruts and the natural cussedness of them.

'Give me the niblick,' we heard emanating from the quixotic-looking spectre, as his faithful Sancho darted forward to his aid. With a dexterous smite he whipped the ball up into the air.

'Now the brassey,' he continued, 'and be hanged to it.'

I took the opportunity to nudge Cobb in the ribs and put up six fingers without saying a word. He quite understood. His face was beaming all over.

Crack! On flew the ball towards the hole, and we shivered as we lay, lest it should over-reach and hold us out to discovery. But the distance was great, and there was hardly sufficient power behind it. On it trundled over the rough ground with capital direction, but many a yard before the flag it lost its impetus and stopped. Stopped, did I say? If so, it was a hasty conclusion, for that which was to happen before it stopped was the most wonderful of all. Fast as came the ball through the air, every bit as fast ran the caddy below, never losing his ground, but dropping back to let it fall to earth, and afterwards dashing on again to overtake it. Then, when the ball was spent and would have gone no more, there shot from the mouth of this extraordinary creature that tongue, so long and so uncanny that it made our blood almost freeze, and the hair of our heads stand up on end.

Just as I have watched a strange chameleon shoot forth its tongue to an abnormal length with marvellous rapidity, and seize an unsuspecting bee with painful accuracy, so did we see the ball gathered up by this. Then for a time we saw it no more.

On his arrival at the hole we were scarcely less astonished to notice Bogie stoop down and pick it out with the unconcerned air of one to whom such occurrences were as common as the days of the week.

'Six?' said he to his caddie as they strode away.

'Six!' replied the latter.

We ate very little breakfast that morning. The curious events of the night seemed to have taken away all our appetite, but the stranger who sat next to Cobb did ample justice for the three of us.

'I've not seen your cards yet,' he found time to remark to my friend between the mouthfuls, 'but report says Bogie does the round in eighty-five.'

'Yes,' replied Cobb, with a wink across to me, 'report says, but I have lately begun to have very grave doubts as to whether Bogie does all the things that are credited to him.'

A DAY WITH THE SPANISH HILL PARTRIDGES

BY HENRY GOODALE

At break of day one fine morning in early September, we are awakened from a troubled sleep by the crowing of cocks and braying of asses, whose melody passes up through the chinks in our bedroom floor from the stable, or general repository of animals, immediately beneath. It is a little roadside 'posada,' where we had arrived late the previous evening, *en route* for a wild district in the Cantabrican mountains, our object there being the chase of the hill partridges.

We number two shooters and four dogs, the division of nationalities being equally divided amongst us—namely, half Spanish, half English; but the dogs claim a family connexion, for they are all pointers, though two first saw the light of day in the Peninsula, while their two English cousins' names are to be found in the book of the dog aristocracy at home. All are old friends and tried. It is not the first time they have worked together at this business, and they all believe they understand how respectively to find and kill the little brown bird in places where he does not know the sight of a keeper and has never heard of such a thing as 'driving.'

There are still some fifteen miles to cover in a diligence which passes, three times a week only, up the mountain road; starting, as all Spanish diligences seem to, in the chill grey hours of the morning. We have scarcely time to swallow a cup of boiling coffee and milk ere the 'cochero' is shouting that 'perhaps to-morrow will do for the señores, for it is very late to-day.' After the manner of every 'cochero' all the world over, he thinks himself of surpassing wit, and no time can be lost in trotting it out for our benefit. He is a merry fellow even at 4.30 in the morning, and cheerfully helps us to stow our gear and dogs; the four latter with B—— inside, myself on the little ledge in front with

the driver. 'How curious,' he remarks, 'you should sit out here when it is so comfortable and warm inside!' I smile and reply that I am not a stranger to the interior of Spanish diligences, but that it takes uncommonly bad weather to drive me inside; then, I add, there is the beautiful scenery to admire, which 'fetches' him immediately. Every Spaniard is proud of the beauties of his country, which he loves dearly, and he thoroughly appreciates any admiration of it from a foreigner. I have often noticed the contrast among similar classes at home, who, whatever their patriotism as Britons may be, often grumble and growl at their

OUR QUARTERS IN THE HILLS

own immediate surroundings. Last summer, when fishing in a particularly lovely but wild district in England, I was holding forth on the beauties of the place, when my native attendant remarked, 'Well, I'm glad as you likes it, sir, but to my mind it's a dismal old shop, and I can't think no 'ow what brings gents from London to an 'ole like this.'

But 'Vamos!' as our 'cochero' remarks with many cracks of the whip and uncomplimentary remarks to all four mules, casting likewise serious doubts on the virtue of their ancestors, and away we rattle at a hand gallop.

It is a lovely morning, the dawn of a perfect day; the sort of morning that when necessity has turned us out at daybreak, and *once* we are out, makes us pity the poor people still dreaming—possibly bad dreams too—in darkened stuffy rooms, and we resolve to be early risers for ever after.

We drive along a deep valley whose floor is covered with purple and white bell-heather in full bloom. A little burn splashing over its rocky bed and the weird cry of a curlew recall the scenes in our own north country. Look! there is the familiar little water-ouzel darting along the sunlit water and sending up a miniature rainbow of colour as he 'dips' for his morning bath. I can

THE HUNTING GROUND

almost fancy I hear the challenge of an old cock grouse: surely it ought to be there to complete this Highland effect! Indeed, I am now in the Scotland of Spain—a land of mountain, forest, and stream—but the mountains are on a mighty scale; even here our aneroid marks 3,400 feet, but, away to the westward, rises peak upon peak ever higher and higher to the majestic Picos de Europa that count their 10,000 feet above sea level. In their shaded valleys lies perpetual snow, and their rugged precipices make a secure retreat for the chamois, which on account of their inaccessibility are still fairly plentiful. The lower ranges are covered with immense forests of oak, beech, and chestnut—the

home of the Spanish bear, roe-deer, and wild-boar, not to mention wolves, foxes, and badgers. May it be long before the wholesale work of the charcoal-burner makes any appreciable difference to the safety of their stronghold, which alone stands between them and extinction. But more of the mountains later on, if my readers follow us further into that beautiful country, almost unknown to the English sportsman.

The sun is well over the summits of the distant mountains. He has 'tipped the little hills with gold,' according to his generous custom, and surrounded them with a soft shimmering haze of orange and crimson. Long bars of golden light stretch through the valley—light that sweeps along in great waves almost palpable to the touch, tinting with every harmonious colour each leaf and rock and stone as it passes; truly the sun is the master landscape-painter of Nature.

In spite of the hilly road, the miles seem to glide rapidly by, for, in addition to the beautiful panorama before us, Manuel, the 'cochero,' is most entertaining. In the interval of hammering and yelling at the unfortunate mules he is full of fun and anecdote. How old tales do turn up again, and who shall fix the author? I have a faint recollection of reading in an English comic paper, some years ago, a joke suspiciously similar to one that he laughingly produced this morning. After an exceptionally stiff dose of the butt-end on the ribs of the near-side wheeler that brought echoes out of the mountains, we observed, 'Your mules want a lot of whip this morning!' 'Bueno, señor; and they're getting it, ar'n't they? Lucky beasts that they are, for it isn't often one gets what one wants in this world, especially if it's nice!'

When we pull up at the little house by the roadside, the good 'padron' and his family are waiting to receive us, we having forewarned them of our visit some days previously. Eager as we are to start shooting at once, formal salutations must be gone through, and many questions asked and answered. Our friend B—— is a great favourite with the natives: his father before him was a mighty hunter in this district, and he had once killed a bear close to this very spot.

We know the word 'hurry' is not understood in Spain, and in trying to teach the meaning of it more delay is often caused; nevertheless, it requires a cast-iron patience at times to get people under way. At last we have it satisfactorily arranged for the lunch to meet us at mid-day, and we charter two boys to lead our spare dogs, carry game-bags, &c. With light hearts at

THAT LITTLE BIT OF SELF-INDULGENCE COST HIM A BROKEN WING

the prospect of a jolly day, we hasten our footsteps to the hunting-ground. This is a deep but broad valley, with here and there patches of stubble from which the scanty harvest has just been cleared. Rough grass, brambles, and whin-bushes intervene, and sometimes a few straggling potato plants represent the cultivation of the little cluster of houses perched high up the sides of the valley. Towering above them are steep, grey precipices, on whose face we can distinguish white splashes betraying the home of some bird of prey—a home out of the reach of man; for above and below these marks we note there is sheer rock for several hundred feet, and though we look with the envious eye of the egg-collector, we must admit that our chance of reaching these eyries would be extremely small. High above in the pure blue sky there are dark specks floating round and round in circles; these are the owners of the homes, built 'with their foundation on a rock.' Perhaps they are golden eagles, but they are too far off to be identified. There is another big eagle we have often seen in the mountains, but do not know his name; our Spanish friends call him a 'Royal,' but we are afraid that is not good enough for ornithologists at home. An occasional vulture floats with motionless pinions across the valley, and close to us a kestrel poises over an unfortunate vole, off which he hopes shortly to make his breakfast. Flitting from bush to bush we notice a great number of lesser blue-tits, and with them golden-crested wrens and creepers and ordinary wrens. At every step bright green grasshoppers spring out of the purple bell-heather and male fern at our feet; the air is full of the hum of insects, and the sweet warm smell of the earth is all around on this lovely morning.

But listen! there is the sound of many wings as a covey of some sixteen partridges rise from behind a bramble-bush many yards ahead of us, and sweeping round a shoulder of rising ground are immediately lost to sight. One, however, has remained a moment too long; doubtless he said to himself, 'Just one more roll in this delicious dust—there can't be any such desperate hurry!' But that little bit of self-indulgence cost him a broken wing from a long shot of B——'s, though as soon as he touched mother earth again he tried to make up for lost time, and gathering himself together like a trained runner, dashed into thick whin-bushes which were handy by. There, after half an hour's fruitless search, we had regretfully to leave him. These partridges are mostly red-legs, and though their relations in England are pretty nimble on their feet, they could not live the pace one brief

moment with the Spanish hill birds. Grey partridges there are also, but very few; for here, as elsewhere, when the two species are mixed, the red birds soon increase at the expense of the grey. Well-broken pointers are not of much use for running birds in this thick cover; the birds are altogether too quick for them, and too cunning to wait for long 'draws' and a steady point when the scent is burning hot: a small quick spaniel with plenty of dash and regardless of thorns would be the dog for wounded birds.

It is a long hunt to find the covey again, but eventually they rise rather wild to a pretty point, and three fall, this time to be gathered without difficulty. Another hour's hard work, in which we pick up five birds; then the aching void inside insists that the furnaces must be fed if the engines are to go on working, and we direct our steps to a clump of trees in the distance which our boys tell us is the place where our lunch is to meet us. It is not such a short distance as it looks up the side of that hill, and now that the excitement of the sport is over every knot in grass and fern seems to catch our feet. Half-way up we discover an orchard of apple and pear trees, whose boughs are laden down with fruit, besides bushels lying on the ground. Apparently no use is to be made of them; but the boy Pepito tells us this is not the case, as the natives make cider of the apples—at any rate, of what the pigs leave. We take a liberal toll of them; they are sweet and juicy—a great deal too good for pigs. However, that is the way of Spain, the land of *vice versâ*—marketable products neglected and wasted for want of energy and enterprise, while the people scarcely have the bare necessaries of life.

We are by no means sorry to reach that clump of trees surrounding a few squalid houses. Felipe had arrived with horse and saddle-bags some time ago, and has already spread lunch under an immense old walnut tree. He produces from a sparkling stream hard by a large leather bottle full of the rich red wine of Aragon, and iced to a turn in the spring; how delicious is a long, long pull of its contents! Felipe smiles broadly when he sees how thoroughly the 'Señor Ingles' has appreciated his forethought.

And now who will say that Spanish cooking is not as good as Parisian when they have turned out of their beds at dawn and have breathed the mountain air of Cantabrica until past mid-day? Roast chickens, veal cutlets, potato omelette, a rich Camembert of the country, called 'imitation' French, but to our mind far superior to the 'genuine;' and then there is to finish up with a large square of guava jelly from the much-troubled Islands of

Spain across the sea. Silence that is more eloquent than speech reigns for some minutes, broken only by the demand for more chicken or another bit of that excellent omelette; occasionally there is a rattle in the branches overhead as a ripe walnut falls to the ground. They are big nuts, the sort we have seen described in Piccadilly as 'Russian,' and charged for accordingly. Felipe eats them with great relish, saying that they are 'very good for the stomach!' What a pity the doctors at home don't take the

LUNCH UNDER THE WALNUT TREES

same view! Especially if they would add 'after dinner with a bottle of port.'

Presently some of the inhabitants of the dwellings—half houses, half stables—come to chat with us; all must be invited to share our meal, for in 'Wild Spain' every diner by the wayside returns the passer-by's 'Good day' with 'And will not your honour also dine?' This is not always an empty compliment, for often provend is scarce and towns far distant, but the invariable polite rejoinder is, 'The greatest of thanks; I have already eaten enough. May your honour benefit much from the meal!' and unless further pressed the wayfarer departs with dignified mien, wishing 'you may go with God and your path be a pleasant one.' However, our saddlebags are well filled. we have ample for all, and

can insist on our visitors taking a taste. Poor people, we know their life is a hard one—it is not every day that meat and white bread fall to their lot; and when the 'bota' has circulated, cigarettes are lighted, and the tongues of these dwellers in the mountains become loosened.

All are anxious to give us information about the partridges, some declaring there are more in the valley this season than for many years past. They talk wildly of enormous coveys and of the extraordinary size of the birds, and the sport we are going to have. We know they say these things to please us and cheer our hearts, their own having been stimulated by the unaccustomed food and wine; but we take no further notice of their babble, for from some experience we have decided that the ordinary peasant is worse than useless in helping one with information about the game of a district. He usually has the vague idea fixed in his mind that the country is teeming with game of all sorts, though he personally has not seen any. He is most anxious to say what he thinks will please the stranger 'if he likes him when he sees him;' if he does not he will give no information at all, or, worse still, that of a purposely misleading character. The best countryman to help one with the partridges and quails is the 'serrano'—mountaineer or herd—the man who from early morn till dewy eve is out on the hillside watching the cattle which belong to the neighbouring village. This man knows where the coveys are to be found at any particular time of the day, and if his services can be obtained much wearisome search through all those miles and miles of thick cover will be avoided. There is also in every district one man at least who is celebrated as a hunter; but his assistance must be accepted with caution, for may he not wish to reserve the best for himself? Such a one had joined us under the walnut tree, but his stories disgusted us: all he thought of was the number of birds he could slay, never mind in what manner, and never mind the maimed ones going away to die a long-drawn-out death, or to fall an early prey to one of the many four-footed enemies of their race. True, he condemned the snare and spring-traps as not being 'good hunting,' but they can scarcely be worse than his murderous old 'escopeta' when loosed off into the middle of some starving covey that during the time of heavy snow he has tempted with corn to feed huddled together in the little clearing that his gun has been carefully trained on from behind some convenient bush. He also is a great adept with the fatal 'réclame' or call-bird, working it with great success in the spring-time, when many an ardent lover meets a charge of shot

ALAS! THAT IT MUST BE THE LAST SUNRISE THAT MANY OF THEM WILL SEE

instead of the endearments which that cry has promised. This, of course, is against the law; for there is a close time for all 'winged' game in Spain, but at present the means for enforcing protection of bird life is very small. But mostly our 'sportsman' trades on the dire necessities of life, food and drink. In the dry summer-time, when all stray water has been sucked up by the burning sun, he will steal out in the grey light of early morning to some spring—the only one perhaps for miles—and there lying hidden will pour his deadly charge into the unsuspecting covey

WE LEAVE FELIPE TO PACK UP

drinking round the fountain the long cool morning drink that must last them through the mid-day heat, raising their heads between each draught as though in thanks to the golden sun whose disc is just rising over the hills. Alas! that it must be the last sunrise that many of them will see. The joyous little life of the company is to be for ever broken up, for at the report of that hateful gun many roll over into the limpid water to stain it with their life's blood, whilst others fly away with broken legs or wounded bodies to drag out miserable hours till death in one form or another relieves them of their sufferings. We fail to make him understand the cruelty of it; he shoots for the pot, the pot of to-day, taking no heed for the morrow. Truly such a vision

takes away the sweetness of our pipe. Let us be more careful than ever to hold well forward and spare the too long shots that to-night we may be free from the pangs of conscience that we have caused unnecessary suffering to the bright little creatures which, though we shoot, we love so well. We decline the proffered help of this native, thinking it is quite on the cards he may lead us in the opposite direction from where partridges are to be found, wishing to reserve what there are for his own 'sport' in the coming winter.

So, leaving Felipe to pack up, we set out again 'on our own heads.' In the first little patch of potatoes we come to one of the dogs makes a steady point, and walking up quickly a big covey of partridges rise, as it seems, all around us. We knock down our first bird 'clean,' but the second falls, with only the tip of his wing broken, on a piece of bare ground. He is immediately on foot again, making for cover in all haste; but he has some dozen yards to go, and before he can reach shelter our Lancaster ejector has enabled us to jam in another cartridge, and just short of the haven he is rolled over like a rabbit in the open. B——, in the meantime, has picked up a brace to his own gun, and is much pleased with our both getting a right and left out of the same covey—a double 'carambola' he calls it, and a very 'notable' occurrence among the wild hill birds. And so we go on through the sunny afternoon, sometimes amidst thick flowering heather, sometimes in stubble and potatoes, generally with long intervals and hard work between the shots; but we manage to pick up here and there a bird. Although we have been working back in the direction of our quarters we find ourselves some four miles away when the long shadows and distant tinkle of goat bells on the hill paths warn us that it is time for man as well as beast to be looking out for his night's shelter.

So guns are shouldered and pipes lighted, and we trudge along the banks of a little stream that will lead us near to supper and bed. It is quite dark when we reach the queer old house forming, all in one, human dwelling, stable, wine-shop, and grocery for the neighbourhood. Bobbing about in the darkness are flaring lights from little oil lamps, shaped like those we have seen dug up at Pompeii, and looking quite as ancient. They illuminate the weather-beaten, kindly faces of the neighbours who have come for news of our day's shooting, and are loud in their congratulations at the seven brace that the game bag produces. Grateful to our nostrils is the savoury odour from the 'puchero' stewing on the wood fire, and we know that a pleasant evening of

chatting, chaff, and laughter will wind up our long day's work; for the Spanish peasant is a merry fellow, always appreciative of joke and raillery, and ever ready to welcome the stranger with the best of his little possessions. Time passes with small bags but happy days, and it is not 'toujours perdrix,' for sometimes a few late quails or an early snipe make a variety, and we are indeed sorry when the last day has arrived and we must leave our beloved mountains, as we are engaged to shoot in a 'coto' ('coto' is the Spanish for game preserve) in the plains of Old Castile, where we shall make much heavier bags; but that tawny, sun-baked country has little else to attract us, and our heart will be in the Highlands of Cantabrica all the time, for 'if you've 'eard the East a-callin', why, you can't 'eed nothin' else.'

COURSING IN THE 'FORTIES

BY W. G. WATERS

Of all forms of sport coursing has probably been the most affected by the law of change. According to modern usage a day's coursing may be—or lately may have been—enjoyed in an enclosed ground with escape coverts for the hares at each corner. The sportsman may sit in a grand stand and enjoy the amenities of the adjacent luncheon room and betting ring, with everything handsome about him. Certain memories of the sport in the 'forties and early 'fifties give a picture of something vastly different.

Coursing, which from Elizabeth's time to the relaxation of the game laws in 1831 had been exclusively the pastime of the aristocracy and people of fashion, became after the date aforesaid essentially the sport of the farmer. Though the qualification for a licence to kill game was abolished, few people except landlords and rich townsmen took out the new certificates. The great bulk of the shooting remained in the landlords' hands. Not one farmer in a hundred carried a gun; but, except on the estates of the greediest preservers, the privilege of coursing after Christmas was generally conceded to the tenant. He usually asked for it as a protection against an excessive number of hares; but, so strong is the love of sport in men country-bred, the hares were always most abundant on the farms of these coursing tenants. These were days of easy rents, low wages, and fair prices; farmers lived comfortably and paid their way even with the happy-go-lucky methods they followed. Half a dozen sacks of corn and a few loads of roots destroyed by hares was reckoned a very moderate equivalent for the four or five coursing parties during the season, to say nothing of casual runs with the brace of greyhounds taken

out for the morning ride, or of the satisfaction felt in sending to the doctor, or to the parson, or to some London friend a present of a coursed hare. The outfit cost next to nothing. A stout cob with wind enough to flounder along over the heavy ploughed land and a brace or so of greyhounds would be enough.

Mr. Brookfield, of White Ollands, was a noted courser, and on the day of his coursing party seven or eight of the neighbouring farmers would assemble in front of his house, accompanied by so many labourers promoted for the nonce to the dignity of dog leaders. These made up the bidden portion of the guests, but they were very few in comparison with the unbidden who came from far and near in swarms, summoned by some mysterious voice. Mr. Brookfield and all his guests may have been careful in keeping secret the day of the gathering, but all in vain, for the road outside the home pasture gate is full of loafers. Inside are the invited guests, for each of whom the host has a word of greeting. Mr. Brookfield is a light spare man of sixty-five, who still finds no day too long for him. One or two of his friends affect a smarter style of dress than his own, and come out in breeches and riding boots. At other times they might be found going with the harriers or foxhounds and exhibiting a slightly patronising attitude towards the simpler sport of coursing, but to-day they are as keen as the best. All the others are eager coursers, swearing by it as a sport, and boasting that they 'never yet rode after a stinking fox, nor ever mean to.' They are of goodly girth, with faces of a brickish red, deepening in places to the hue of beetroot. They wear heavily nailed boots, leather or duffel gaiters, long overcoats coming down well below the knee, and low-crowned felt hats. Round about in twos and threes are the greyhounds, shivering and whimpering and impatient of the delay. The young farm lads who are in charge of them are hardly less eager, and are evidently bent on a day's pleasure. Slightly aloof from the central group are two or three butchers' carts, each accompanied by a brace or a leash of mud-bespattered greyhounds. These, though not of the party, have been bidden by the host to separate themselves from the ruck of stragglers on the road and follow with the horsemen, to take their chance of getting a course for their greyhounds, should the supply of invited dogs run short.

The country butcher was, in those days, a sort of greyhound trainer. He had almost always three or four puppies in keep for the neighbouring farmers, feeding them judiciously with scraps from his shop, and giving them plenty of exercise every day as

he went his rounds. Mr. Ribstone, who is chatting with Mr. Brookfield, is evidently a person of some consideration with the company, for he gets a nod and a friendly word from every horseman who passes, and more than one bantering offer to run the best dog he can show for a wager of a crown. The morning is raw and cold, and there are few refusals when Mr. Brookfield suggests a glass of cherry brandy just to keep out the cold. The cordial disposed of, a move is made towards the nearest field of ploughed ground.

The bite of the raw cold air, and the gloom of the leaden canopy above, are matters of small account to men in search of a day's sport. These have never disciplined and cultivated their perceptions to shudder or exult with the varying humours of the sky. Though the face of Nature, with the ever-varying beauty of the procession of the months, is always lying before their eyes, they are insensible to its subtle charm. They miss all the delight which is the reward of the cultured intelligence, but they miss also the pain. It is well perhaps for them that they possess no intellectual side to their being, to be vexed by the pathos of yellowing leaves and bare black woods, or by the desolation of the chill mist of winter brooding over the sodden flats.

This morning the weather, bleak as it is, seems to be to the taste of some of the sportsmen; for old Mr. Delf, the veteran of the field, says 'tis just the right sort of day for coursing. Sunshine never was good for sport, and never would be. The movement of the mounted party out of the farm pasture into the road sets in motion the horde of unauthorised stragglers. They are indeed a motley crew; many are professional tramps, on their way from one workhouse to another, and these Mr. Brookfield warns, in a tone which shows that he knows their tricks and their manners, to keep off his land; and his command is repeated by certain of those who stand, perhaps, one degree higher in his estimation than the tramps themselves, by way of currying favour and being allowed to spend the rest of the day plodding over the sticky loams. The agricultural labourer who does an occasional stroke of poaching is well represented. It may help him in the disposition of his snares to-morrow night to ascertain from the behaviour of the hares where their favourite 'runs' are. To judge from the number of bakers' carts that hang about the roads all day, the district may well go short of bread for the nonce. Divers tradesmen from the neighbouring town, who have risen to the dignity of horsekeepers, ride up in the course of the day and receive a half-contemptuous invitation from Mr. Brook-

THE GREYHOUNDS CATCH SIGHT OF HER AT THE SAME SECOND, AND FLY AFTER HER LIKE THE WIND

field to join the party. He, good man, cannot be brought to see that a fellow who gets his bread by measuring calico or weighing sugar in ordinary life has any business on horseback, and he will laugh uproariously and count it a just retribution should any one of them get a fall to-day, and so will all the rest; for the traditions of feudalism, asserting the superiority of the man of acres over the man of bales and barrels, were by no means extinct in those days.

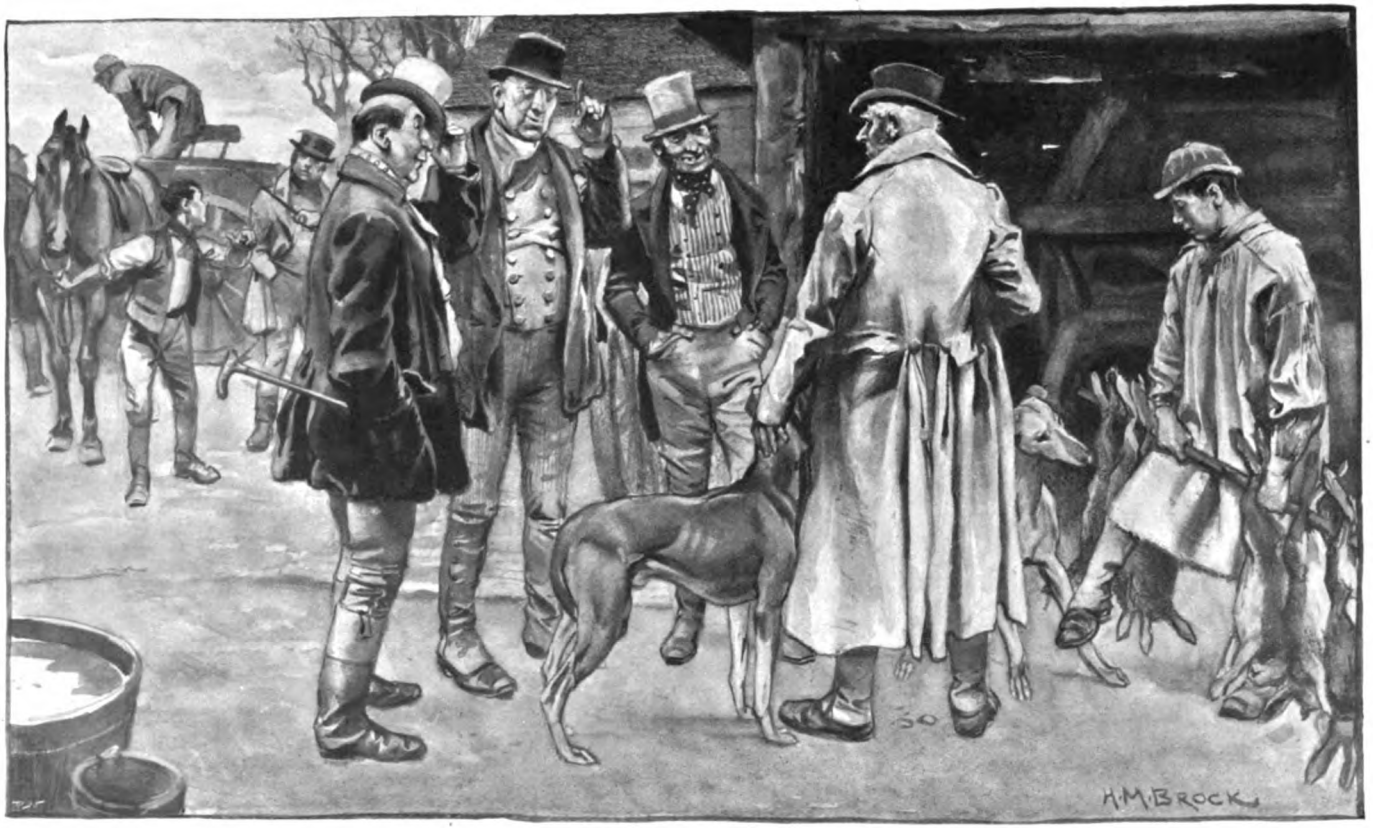
Two greyhounds are loosed. To have them led in leash by a slipper was a refinement which was then only practised at Newmarket and other match meetings. The horsemen form in line, and ride slowly down the side of the field. Every eye is cast warily about, for everyone is ambitious to achieve the honour of finding puss on her form, and of giving out the warning 'Soho!' To espy a brown hare squatting amidst the rough brown clods is no easy matter, and needs a practised eye: to ride past her and leave her sitting is the gravest of misdemeanours. Should a luckless novice be detected in such a laches, he is covered with shame, and is the legitimate butt of every local wit for the remainder of the day, if not for the remainder of the season; and in some cases, where the host takes coursing very seriously, is fined half a crown. At last a hare is started, some fifty yards in front of the party. The greyhounds catch sight of her at the same second, and fly after her like the wind. A shout goes up all along the line, and several of the more ardent spirits spur their horses forward, to be checked at once by Mr. Brookfield with a stern command not to ride over fresh ground, and perhaps with a sarcastic question whether they have ever been in a coursing field before. The courser must, in a measure, abjure the fierce delight of the foxhunter in following the chase: he must sit still and watch the lithe, sinewy, cruel dogs do their work, for fear of riding up other hares on the untried ground, and it is only when hare and dogs disappear into an adjacent field that he makes for a gate or, if he should be very young and headstrong, jumps the fence.

By this time the greyhounds are close up to the hare, and to a novice it would seem that every hare once viewed must necessarily die; but the old hands know better. Philosophic historians teach us that the weak and defenceless amongst the nations have often managed to hold their own, by the address and cunning which have been developed in the severe discipline of an existence passed in constant vigilance, against the violence and cruelty of their stronger neighbours; and here, before our eyes, is an excellent object lesson on the same theme.

The foremost hound makes a fierce dash at the hare; but she, acting on some impulse the origin of which we cannot now stop to determine, turns sharply in the nick of time, and the greyhound, with his mouth full of earth and stones instead of fur and flesh, tumbles heels over head. When he recovers himself, he finds his companion, who has also been thrown off many yards by the hare's adroit manœuvre, a long way ahead of him, but not far enough to turn the hare again before she gains the shelter of a thick boundary fence, towards which she has all the while been heading. She bolts through this in a moment, the dogs are thrown off, and she is scuttling along on the other side towards a friendly plantation, which she gains unseen. Here we will leave her to recover her breath. She has fought as best she could, and run away to live to show sport another day, provided she succumb not, in the interval, to the sportsman's gun, or the poacher's snare, or the higgler's lurcher, or the fox, or the polecat; for the foes of these poor defenceless hares are so numerous that one may wonder that a single one manages to survive.

'I always like to blood the first course, neighbour Brookfield,' says old Mr. Delf. 'Blarm her! I knew she was a cunnin' one as soon as ever I see the line she took. Well, we'll ha' the next one as gets up, at any rate. Sam, let out my old brindly dorg.'

Several knowing winks are exchanged as Mr. Delf gives his directions, and even a little laughter is heard; for Mr. Delf is known to be a sportsman who courses chiefly with the object of having a good show of hares at the end of the day—an aim in which he is well seconded by the well-educated animal who is now loosed by Sam. 'Eh, Mike old man, we'll show 'em how to do it, won't we?' says his owner as the dog bounds up to him. A young black dog is also loosed. Before long a sitting hare is found by Mr. Brookfield, and is startled from her form so as to give her about fifty yards 'law.' Both greyhounds go straight up to her, the young dog leading. He turns her once very cleverly, then a second time, after that then a strange thing happens. Old Mike stops short and stands still, with his ears pricked up, watching in Lucretian fashion his coadjutor plunging along after the hare over the heavy loam. The hare is a strong one, and under ordinary circumstances would easily escape, for she is almost equal in speed to the single greyhound after her; but there is old Mike to be reckoned with. Having satisfied himself as to the goal of safety the hare is making for, he gallops leisurely away to a certain gate, and there stands, with open



PROFUSE IN THEIR EXPRESSIONS OF HOPE THAT MR. BROOKFIELD MAY HAVE HAD A GOOD DAY'S SPORT

mouth, ready to receive her as she flies towards what she vainly deemed to be a sure refuge. Her craft, after all, is of a very inefficient nature, and fails her miserably as soon as ever it is opposed to craft and strength combined. As to old Mike, the possession of such gifts as his ought to have brought him to a felon's death on the nearest tree.

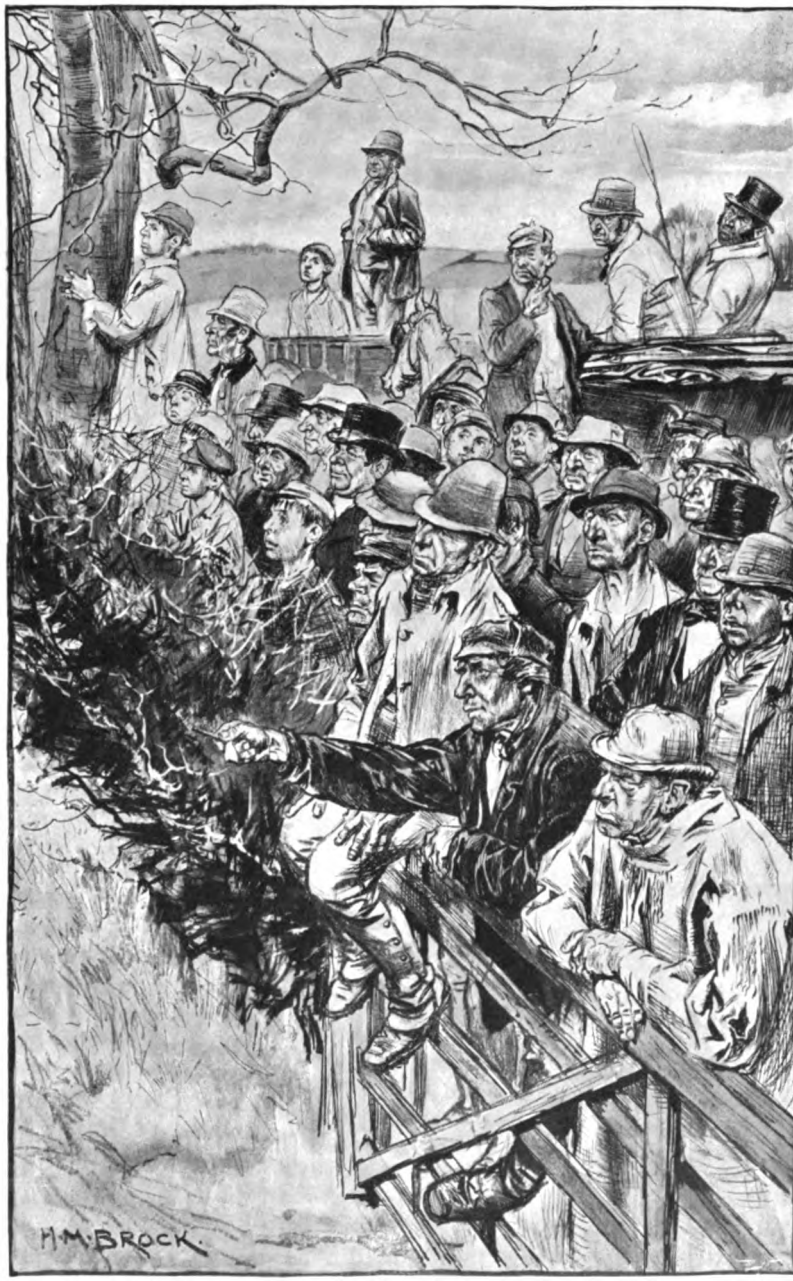
Mr. Delf raises a loud but rather uncomfortable laugh over the success of a manœuvre which he has witnessed many a time before to-day, but there is too much of the sportsman's love of fair play in the men around him to allow any endorsement of his gratulation; indeed, they all seem a little ashamed at participating in such a cold-blooded murder, and Ned Campling, a smart young farmer, is heard to mutter that, if old Delf will run such a brute as that, he ought to stay at home and run him on his own land. It was one of Ned's dogs that ran with old Mike, and his indignation is quite legitimate, as the greyhound, though his natural impulse is to run fairly, and to follow the hare in honourable fashion in all her twists and windings, grows cunning with age and learns to cut off corners—*teste* Mike; and young dogs will soon fall into these bad habits if they be often associated with such shameless villains.

Mr. Brookfield, though not well pleased himself, brushes aside the rising cloud of discord by ordering two more greyhounds out of the leashes. The line of horsemen advances to the top of the field and then returns on a new beat; just as the last corner of the field is being ridden over, a hare starts up and makes boldly for the open ground which has just been searched, a sign that she may be a good one; and a good one she proves to be. It is soon evident that this is not the first time she has had to run for her life. She turns and turns again, throwing the greyhounds off a good twenty yards each time, all the while making her way towards the corner whence she may gain the shelter of the friendly wood. Mr. Delf looks on in gloomy apprehension of her escape, and, were he the master of the sports, he would certainly let Mike loose to finish her off at the fence. Mr. Brookfield, undeterred now by any fear of 'fresh ground,' plunges along on his lusty cob, and, while encouraging the dogs, has a good word for the hare as well. 'She's a rare game 'un, ain't she, Ned?' he shouts to young Campling, 'and if she do get away this time, we shall know there's a hare left in these parts worth coursin'. Keep back there, Lintot, and you others, and let her have fair play.'

But the brace of greyhounds behind her are good ones too,

and in fine wind. The many miles they have run behind Mr. Ribstone's cart, and the tit-bits of beef and good barley meal upon which they have been fed, now do them good service and give them heart to hold out over the wet slippery land, and the hare is beginning to feel that she is not so fresh as she was when she started. A 'kill' at last is made at her and only just missed. The dogs gather themselves up again rapidly, and the next minute all is over.

One course is very much like another. There are hares in plenty, before noon half a dozen have been killed, and several of the greyhounds are disabled by cut feet, or by wounds from thorns and hedge-stakes. The unauthorised throng on the roads increases, and certain of the more daring of these join themselves to the field party and remain unmolested; for Mr. Brookfield is now too much occupied with other cares to trouble about their presence. As soon as the evening shades begin to thicken, the day is declared over, and the cavalcade wends homewards, followed up by the stragglers to the gate of the home pasture. The butchers' and bakers' carts also find that their business leads them thither, and divers local cattle dealers, driving useful-looking hackneys, who have turned up during the day and resolutely kept the party in sight, penetrate as far as the stable yard and are profuse in their expressions of hope that Mr. Brookfield may have had a good day's sport—a hope not unconnected with a more deep-seated and interested one that they may, when they drive homewards, carry away a hare with them. Though Mr. Brookfield does not listen to the suggestions of one half of the simple countrymen who ask or spell for one, his larder to-night will not contain more than a very modest share of the day's kill. To every invited guest a hare is given as a matter of course, and any butcher who may at any time have had a puppy 'at run' for the host would think himself aggrieved should he be sent empty away. And in country places the man who gives away hares finds life run more smoothly in many respects than the man who keeps all for himself. There is old Martin, who owns a little strip of freehold, heavily mortgaged though it be, which runs alongside Mr. Brookfield's best coursing ground. If he liked to trap or snare he could play havoc with the farmer's sport; so of course old Martin must have his hare to keep him in good humour. Then there is Joe Bolton, the landlord of the 'Green Dragon,' to whose ears most of the village gossip seems to come sooner or later. Joe has often given Mr. Brookfield hints that hares have been offered for sale after nightfall in dark corners of



THE UNAUTHORISED THRONG ON THE ROAD

the village, and that Sam Hall and Dick Fisher have been spending money pretty freely lately. The farmer has read clearly enough between the lines. A watch has been set, and, in consequence, Sam and Dick have gone to the county town for a month's sojourn at the public expense; so naturally Mr. Bolton is not forgotten. There is Cox the attorney, too; for, though Mr. Brookfield has little reason to expect any positive benefit from the unpaid services of this gentlemen, he is not free from the popular dread of the man of law, and has a notion that an attorney, if he be so minded, may work mischief unbounded. Then, again, Cox is a useful fellow in looking after the registration, and there are many voters in the district, free and independent as far as territorial influence goes, who would never dare to vote otherwise than as Cox might direct. Farmer Brookfield, like a wise man, loved the smell and taste of a roast hare on his board, but he was satisfied that he would do well to forego the savour of a dozen or so in the course of the year and distribute them, as so much grease, to make the wheels of life run easily.

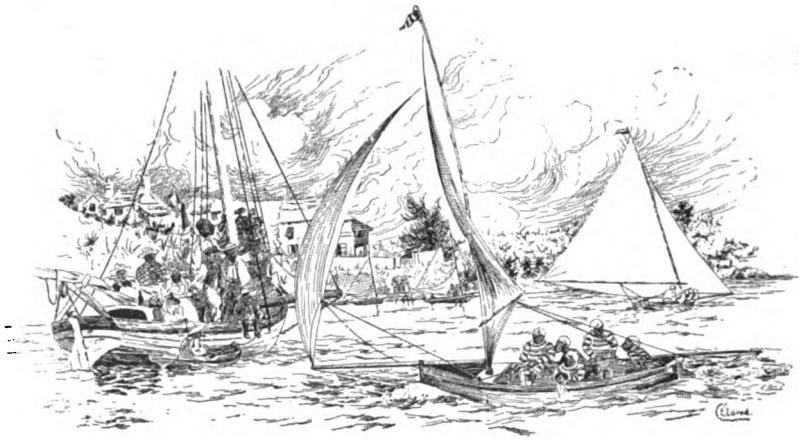
The business of the day is by no means over, though the last course has been run, and the greyhounds, lame and footsore, sent off home. A day's coursing which did not wind up with a good dinner was a very poor affair in the estimation of the farmers of the 'forties and 'fifties. No one has tasted a morsel since breakfast, and the sportsmen sit down to table with mighty appetites. The dinner party, as a form of entertainment, was little understood by Mr. Brookfield and men of his class, and Mrs. Brookfield and her daughters would never appear on these occasions. After a day's fast in the open air, good eating provokes, and perhaps needs, good drinking; and the humour is prone to wax a trifle broad as the hours roll on, and the ale of dinner gives place to punch, brandy-and-water, and pipes. There is no lack of port and sherry, not destitute of fire, on the board, but these are not in favour to-night. They may be well enough at other times, but at a coursing dinner rum punch, and plenty of it, is voted the right drink by acclamation. The womenkind have been hard at work all day in the kitchen over the stewed beef, the roast geese, the chicken pies, the tarts and puddings which make up the feast, and would certainly be glad enough to put on their smart frocks and sit down to taste their own handiwork; for life is a trifle dull with them, and weeks will often pass without the sight of a fresh face. It is true their presence might be felt as a restraint, and they could hardly hope to win much attention from the famished hunters till the first

inward cravings should have been appeased. On this point, however, Mr. Brookfield's word is law. His conservatism is of a sort we are fast losing sight of. Neither his mother nor his grandmother was ever present at a coursing dinner, and this precedent is enough for him. He and his friends are unconsciously imitating Homer's heroes by the fashion in which they demolish the masses of meat before them; and, besides this, he is giving force to the dictum of Hesiod that there are times when it is unseemly for a wife to wish to sit at her husband's board.

When conversation springs up—and the party is by no means a silent one when the geese lie in ruins and the mass of stewed beef is shorn of half its bulk—the talk naturally drifts towards the sport of the day. One hears plenty about 'first turns,' and 'running up,' and 'go-bys,' and the details of every course are given at length. The pride of ownership waxes strong in the generous warmth of blood generated by Farmer Brookfield's punch, and Ned Campling is ready to match his dog 'Hieover' to run for a sovereign against any other that can be brought against him. Some one suggests that he should tackle old Mike; but this proposal Ned dismisses with a good round oath, and a remark luckily unheard by Mr. Delf, who is talking at the top of his voice about the wonderful greyhounds he has owned in his time. Finally the wager is accepted by Mr. Lintot, and the match is fixed to be run on Ned's farm next week.

The time for harmony has now come. Out of those present some four or five are known as singers—that is, they have learned in their youth some song then in vogue, and this song they will go on singing at gatherings like this, as long as they live, without taking heed to enlarge their repertory. Every one who may listen will have heard these old favourites over and over again. Every word, every note, will be anticipated in memory, but this does not render these less grateful, and they are welcomed as old friends. Indeed, to judge from the faces of the listeners and from the rounds of applause which follow the last note of each song, they enjoy their music quite as keenly as the *virtuosi* who sit diligently through season after season of Monday Pops and Philharmonics. The songs are mostly of a sentimental and melancholy character, and rarely contain any references to the rapture of the chase or the pleasures of the bottle. 'Ben Bolt' is questioned by some officious friend as to his recollection of a certain 'Sweet Alice,' and treated to a catalogue of her charms; superfluously, it would seem, considering the subsequently

revealed relations between the lady and gentleman. The behaviour of the friend is in the worst possible taste, seeing how it is announced in the last line that 'Sweet Alice lies under the stone.' 'Jack Steadfast' is celebrated as the prince of messmates. 'The Old Armchair' is dragged out of the corner to be wept over, and the woodman is entreated to spare that particular tree. Most of the songs have a chorus, which is always taken up with a will; and to those which have not one the company generally attaches one of its own arranging, and gives it out with fine vigour, especially at the heel of the evening. The feast began at five, and will not be over much before midnight; and as strong drink has been going all these hours, there is valid cause for the boisterous laughter, the uncertain speech, and the unsteady walk of divers of the guests, as they make a start for their several homes. Most of them have to travel five or six miles through winding country lanes and over wide commons in the dark winter's night; but there is not the least apprehension that mishap will befall anybody, though three or four are, to put it moderately, half-seas over. It is an experience they have been bred to. They have still their wits about them enough to keep awake, and their horses know the way home. For Ned Campling the night is still young; as he rides off in company with two or three others who are going his way, he will hear of nothing else than that they shall pull up at his house and taste some whisky—then rather a new-fangled drink in rural England —that a friend of his has just sent him from London. It was a rough way of taking pleasure, but it did not recur too frequently, and to men who lived such healthy lives as Mr. Brookfield and his guests it was comparatively harmless. The gulf between the men of forty years ago and the men of to-day is indeed a huge one. No doubt the latter are better farmers, and in many ways more useful citizens. Pleasanter fellows, or more indomitably courageous under their heavy burdens, it would be hard to find; but, considering that I myself was a contemporary —a little junior perhaps—of that company of veterans whose uncouth humours I have been describing, I must not be asked to set down the comparison, for the new as against the old, in too emphatic terms.



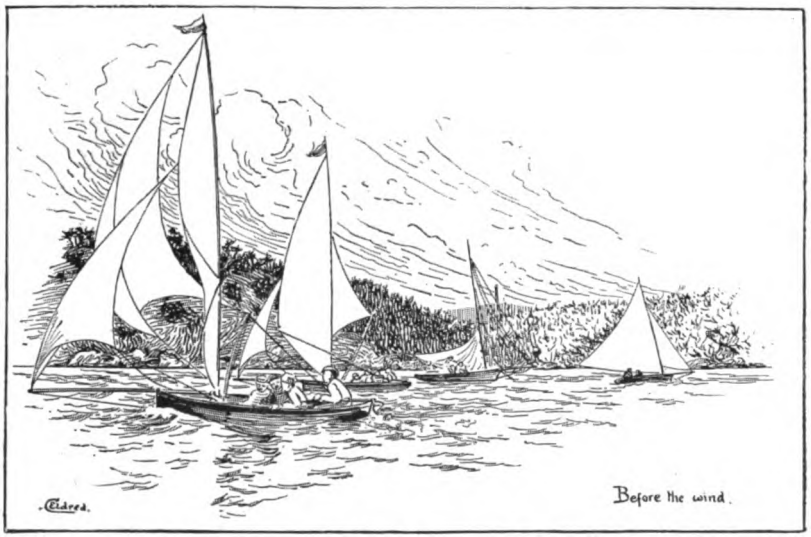
BERMUDA DINGEY RACING

BY CHARLES E. ELDRED

BERMUDA gives its name to the rig which is peculiar to its craft, and which is universal to the pilot-boats, freight-boats, and fishing-boats, down to the smallest open dingeys. The sailing and racing of these small boats might certainly be the sport named as the national pastime of Bermuda, if so small an island might lay claim to a national pastime. The enthusiasm for the sport touches all classes. The Hamilton merchant, the dockyard mechanic, and the coloured fisherman—all these in their many varieties may be seen in the crews of these little craft. Formerly it was customary among the white people always to employ a coloured pilot to sail their boats, but these pilots in time grew so conceited and overbearing as to become intolerable. Moreover, it was sometimes questioned whether races were fairly sailed. It was certainly in every sense a good thing when the owners undertook the management of their own boats. The result has been to produce a form of sport in praise of which too much cannot be spoken.

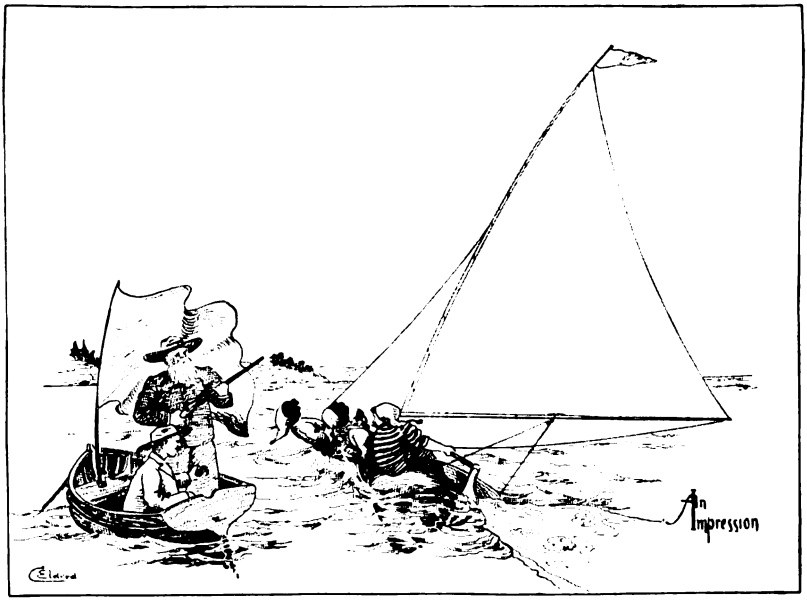
Dingeys may be either decked or open, but it is the open ones that call for the greatest skill in handling; and it is over the races between these that the greatest excitement prevails. The point which most impresses the stranger is the enormous spread of canvas which a 14 foot open boat is made to carry, and that in a fresh breeze. At such a time nothing but the most

dexterous handling keeps them afloat. Indeed, the qualifications required of the crew are as much those of the acrobat as of the sailor. A crew usually numbers five hands, who are distributed thus: one attends the jib, another the main sheet, one steers, one shifts ballast, and one bales. Sometimes a crew numbers four only, in which case the baling and ballast-shifting are both performed by one member. In either case these duties are by no means of the lightest. The fact that every individual member of the crew contributes personally towards the winning or the losing of a race adds much to the interest of the sport. This fact, too, renders it a difficult matter for a stranger ever to get a place as one of a crew, for one has to become well



naturalised and familiar with Bermudians before they cease to continually remind him that 'it takes a lifetime to learn to sail a Bermuda boat.' The handling of the jib-sheet is of as much importance as the handling of the tiller; and he who aspires to perfection in ballast-shifting must be able to juggle with half-hundredweight pigs of lead with the greatest freedom under the most adverse circumstances. A stranger watching a boat beating to windward might hastily condemn the behaviour of the crew as being wilfully eccentric. Certainly they present a most extraordinary spectacle. Seated in a row along the weather gunwale, they may be seen leaning back until their bodies are parallel with the surface of the water, and only their legs in the

boat. Suddenly they all sit upright, or even lean forward, their positions varying continually with the force of the wind. So long as the water is smooth, no more need be shipped than an active baler can easily get rid of. But so little freeboard do these boats show, that in anything approaching rough water the best handled is liable to get swamped. In consequence of the mast being stepped so far forward, the tendency in running before the wind is for a boat to bury her bows, and this is perhaps as frequent a cause of disaster as any other. It is, indeed, by no means an uncommon occurrence for a boat to sink during a race; on the contrary, a regatta seldom finishes without such an



incident. It is a contingency for which, however, every provision is made. In the first place no crew would allow anyone unable to swim to form one of their number. Again, every boat carries a small buoy secured by a sufficiently long line to allow it to come to the surface if the boat sinks. Thus the spot where she has gone down is at once marked. Afterwards a diver descends and removes the ballast, when the boat comes to the surface, as a rule little or none the worse.

The course of a race is invariably round two mark-boats about a mile and a half apart, and placed in the direction the wind is blowing. Starting from the leeward mark-boat, the boats

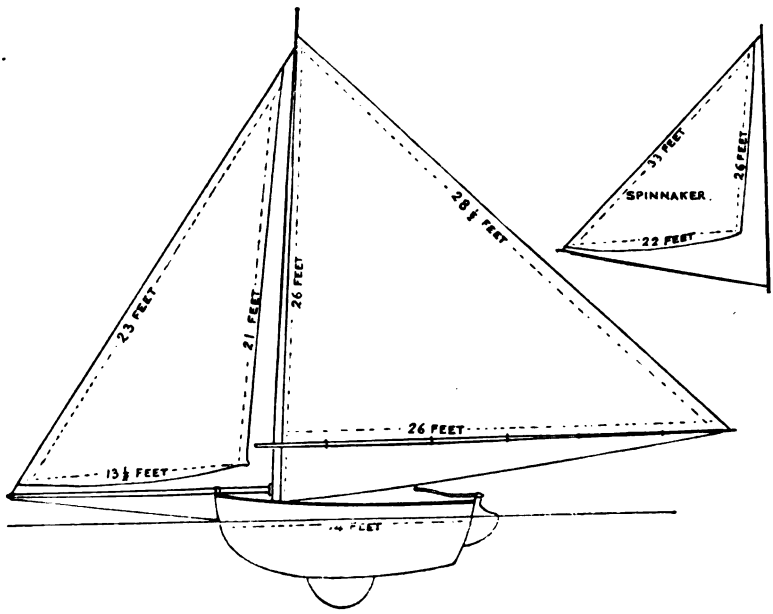
sail twice to windward and once to leeward. At the start the dingeys are all clustered round the stake-boat with all their sails set, in such positions that they can get away in the order of their time allowance at the starter's word 'Go!' This arrangement of starting gives a race its utmost possible interest to lookers-on, who from the first can see what the handicapping is, and at the finish know that the leading boat is the winner. On Friday afternoons all stores and business establishments close throughout the summer months between May and October, and the principal diversion of these half-holidays is the sailing races. If the weather admits of it, the course is laid in Hamilton Harbour, where the numerous small islands form the best possible vantage ground for spectators. Under the shelter of the land nearest to the windward mark-boat small yachts of five to ten tons make fast to the docks whilst the owners and their friends land and picnic on the grassy slopes, from where they can see the dingeys round the mark-boat and set their spinnakers for the run to leeward. The coloured people make up parties and hire the large freight-boats, taking with them a plentiful supply of water-melons and effervescing drinks of wonderful rainbow tints. But they take a keen interest in the racing too, and at the finish, when the steam-launch whistles are hooting, they add to the clamour by blowing hoarse blasts on conch-shells.

The English yachtsman accustomed to hold his course on the starboard tack would find cause for some astonishment at the behaviour of these boats when beating. For he would observe that whenever two boats are approaching each other on opposite tacks, *both* of them go about; the rule in this case being that either boat can hail the other to go about, and then both boats must tack. In handicapping no account is taken of sail area, measurements of the hull only being considered. Briefly, this measurement is the product of the length, the mean breadth, and the mean depth. The following are the names of the best-known boats, all of which are within half an inch or so of 14 feet 3 inches on the water-line :—

Flora	Victory	Oscar	Magic
Helion	Sunbeam	Diamond	Aline
Wedge	Dawn	Glimpse	Teal

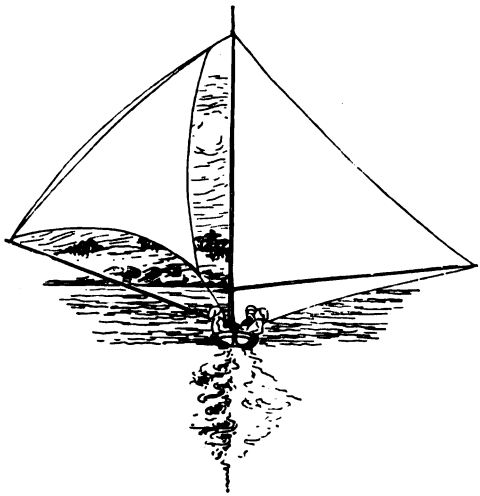
Their beam varies from 4 feet 2 inches to 4 feet 11½ inches, and depth from 1 foot 9½ inches to 2 feet 1 inch. The depth measurement does not include the deep keel, which often brings the draught of a boat to about 5 feet. A false keel of wood a foot

or 18 inches in depth runs the whole length of the boat, and beneath this is bolted a semicircular plate of sheet iron known as the *fan*. The rig is essentially the same as that of the larger yachts, the only points of difference being in the manner the sails are fitted. In the first place they cannot be reefed. Each boat has two or even three complete suits of sails and spars, and before the race fits the one adapted to the strength of the wind, and this, of course, has to be carried throughout the race. An additional interest is given to a race if the weather is such that only a few of the boats venture to carry their largest suits. The mainsail is laced to the mast, and the boom is represented by a spar from the clew to a foot or less forward of the mast. Here it is held by a heel-rope and small tackle, by which it is set up taut, something similar to the fashion that a sprit-sail is set with a sprit. The mast has no shrouds, its support being a strong thwart across the top of the gunwale, and a stout forestay which carries the jib to the end of a bowsprit 4 inches in thickness. The sails are usually made of 9-oz. American cotton duck. The following diagram will give a better idea than descriptions of the general dimensions and proportions:—



The time of year when Bermuda is most resorted to by visitors is during the winter months. At this time all the small

boats are safely laid up, for if there is any wind at all at this period of the year it assumes the form of either a gale or a hurricane. Consequently it is only the few who brave the heat of the summer months (the accounts of which, by the way, are usually exaggerated) that have any opportunity of witnessing a form of sport the like of which, it is safe to say, is not to be seen elsewhere. Whether the bicycle (which has arrived) will have any effect in lessening the interest in sailing, it would be hard to say. It is to be earnestly hoped it will not. At any rate, the roads are far less adapted for wheeling than the waters are for sailing.



FOOTBALL DURING THE SEASON

BY CAPTAIN PHILIP C. W. TREVOR

ASSOCIATION football bids fair to take a greater hold upon the affections of the English public than even the national game of cricket. Scotland, however, holds the record for a 'gate.' On New Year's day at Glasgow, the Glasgow Rangers played, or rather began to play, a match with the Celtic Club. The attendance on that occasion exceeded seventy thousand; but the crowd surged on to the field, and the game had finally to be abandoned. Few good League matches are played to an audience of fewer than fifteen thousand, and there is every prospect at present that in years to come the public will patronise the game, as played under Association rules, in even greater numbers. Nor is their patronage misplaced, for not once in twenty times is a first-class Association fixture productive of a poor game.

One of the features of the season has been the success of Sheffield United in the League contest. Up to December they had not recorded a loss, although they had certainly 'drawn' a rather large number of their matches. At this point they appeared in danger of breaking down. They lost two games in quick succession, and (perhaps not unnaturally) the critic was at once at hand with apt adage and familiar saw: 'Too fast to last,' 'The hare runs second to the tortoise.' But with the New Year Richard was himself again (if indeed he had really ever been anyone else), and was not slow to proclaim the fact. On two successive Saturdays the Aston Villa eleven succumbed to the men who 'came from Sheffield,' and who thus made themselves practically sure of the League Cup. Their success has been practically due to the work of their 'halves,' Needham, Warren, and Johnson, who constitute a really first-class line; and although their forwards have not been prolific scorers, their defence has been wonderfully safe. But three good half-backs are the making of a side, and it is at half-back that the leading amateur clubs break down. Strangely enough, in spite of their consistent play

in League matches, Sheffield United were defeated in the first round of the English Cup, although at the second attempt, by Burslem Port Vale, a team that was only second in the Midland League. A curious thing occurred in this match. The goal which lost them the game was scored through their goal-keeper Foulkes (there was a gale blowing at the time) leaving his charge and playing among the forwards. It is curious that, just previous to the incident Foulkes in his new position had been instrumental in scoring the only point which his side could claim. The chagrined Yorkshire spectators, therefore, perhaps had reason when they made trite remarks above 'having too much of a good thing.' Neither in the English Cup competition nor in the League Championship have Aston Villa, which a year ago secured both trophies, done themselves justice. They lost to Derby County in the first round of the former, and their two defeats by Sheffield United practically destroyed their chance for the latter.

West Bromwich Albion, under the leadership of the evergreen Bassett, have done well in the large majority of their fixtures, and the same may be said of Everton. Indeed, the League competition has been in 1897–98, if possible, more full of interest than ever. The points that separate the clubs in the van of the League tables from those which bring up the rear are fewer in number than in previous seasons—a fact that in itself proves the advance in skill and science which the game, as played by the leading elevens, has made. Nor has this advance been confined to professional combinations. Amateur Association football in point of absolute merit has never stood higher than at the present time. The consistent success of the renowned Corinthian Club has given universal satisfaction. This distinguished amateur side drew with Sheffield United when the teams met in Yorkshire, and defeated them in London. Nor did these results cause any particular surprise. Probably at no time since its formation has the Corinthian Club been able to put a better side into the field. Mr. G. O. Smith is distinctly the finest exponent of the game who has yet appeared, and no representative side is complete without Mr. Oakley. In Mr. Burnup and Mr. Alexander the club has a left wing which it would be difficult to surpass, and in goal Mr. Campbell is International form. With Oxford and Cambridge supplying the leading men to this brilliant combination, it is a matter of regret that University form itself should be somewhat below par. It would be idle to describe either of the elevens which opposed one another at Queen's Club in the 'Varsity match as a first-class side. There was a tendency to prophesy a

win for Oxford; but with Messrs. Burnup, Alexander, and Campbell in the opposing ranks, the forecast never seemed justified to those who had studied the previous performances of the players. In both teams there was a lack of class at half-back, and the narrow victory of Cambridge by one goal no doubt indicated correctly the respective merits of the two elevens. This want of form is due in chief to the somewhat lukewarm interest that is taken in Association football at the 'Varsities. Without strong interest there can be no big gates; without big gates fixtures with the leading professional clubs cannot be arranged; and without meeting such opponents it is impossible to enlarge the calibre of the play and players at the two great amateur nurseries of the game.

Association football, however, has never flourished greatly in the South of England, in spite of the plucky attempts of various individual clubs. In the English Cup competition of the present season Southampton alone survived the opening stage, Luton Town and Woolwich Arsenal both being defeated. Southampton, in fact, easily outstripped all previous performances of Southern clubs, though their phenomenal victories would have been more popular with Southerners had the management of the club procured their players nearer home. Scotland furnished more than one member of the side, and from Southampton to Scotland is a far cry. Yet, in spite of their brilliant record, even the most sanguine will hesitate to foretell, at any rate in the immediate future, the success of a strictly South-country organisation when pitted against a First Division League club. Not the least satisfactory feature of the season is the fact that players and supporters of the Association game are practically satisfied with the arrangements, work, and verdicts of their governing bodies. Some few mistakes have naturally occurred. A great change was made in the game by the alteration of the handling rule. By the new rules only intentional handling is penalised. The change at first seemed beneficial; stoppages were fewer in number, play was faster, and altogether the game was rendered more attractive to the spectator. In fact, in some fixtures the discordant note of the whistle never obtruded itself upon the public ear from start to finish. Subsequently, however, it became a matter of some doubt whether the new rule really worked well. To be human is to be artful, and the football man is particularly human. The discreet player soon found that he could derive much benefit from intentional handling without attracting the attention of the referee. That long-suffering official, therefore, in the plenitude

of his experience now rates the compliment paid by the rule to his discretionary capacity somewhat lower than he did at the beginning of the season. He finds motive as difficult to detect in football as in other occupations of life. The authorities, too, were not without their little sins of omission. The need for alteration in the existing law relative to the referee giving free kicks without appeal became very apparent during the season. In several of the most important matches a side scored, but lost the point on account of the infringement of a rule by the opposing side. To quote an instance: In a match between the Corinthians and Preston North End the former 'netted the ball,' but the point was disallowed because one of the latter had just previously fouled a player. Obviously, the Corinthians would not have appealed for a free kick. Under the circumstances the concession was quite useless; and the incident had, as far as they were concerned, merely the effect of converting a win into a draw. These slight blemishes, however, did not amount even to spots upon the sun of management. There might be errors, but there was no fear, favour, or affection. The powerful Aston Villa Club used *illegal* means to procure a player, and the powerful Aston Villa Club was fined 50*l.* by the Football Association for the said offence.

Amateur Rugby football has fallen upon evil times; a state of affairs that is rendered the more humiliating by the fact that the Northern Union, like its prototype, flourishes even as a green bay tree. In England the season has been in every way a disappointing one. No new player of more than ordinary calibre has come to the front, and it is but natural—for the Rugby footballer has at best a short career—that several of the men who won their spurs in recent years should have failed to retain their form. The early matches gave promise of better things, and at one time it appeared that in Mr. P. G. Jacob we had a half-back who was fit to rank with the giants of the past. Unfortunately he met with an accident, and on his return to the game after an interval of some weeks he disappointed expectation. He was, however, awarded his England cap, but did not distinguish himself in the one International match in which he took part. Though the positions in the two games are, of course, widely different, it is a singular coincidence that both under the Association and the Rugby code the greatest difficulty should have been experienced in procuring good half-backs. The attempt to do so in Rugby football was, in fact, productive of a record. In the first trial match between North and South, which is played with a view to selecting the English XV., not one of the four half-

backs who took part in the match was accorded International honours. Such a result is without precedent in the history of the game. Probably the most promising player of the year is Mr. Royds, who, like Mr. Jacob, is a member of the famous Blackheath Club; and who, like Mr. Jacob, was compelled, owing to a broken collar bone, to play the part of a spectator during a portion of the season. On returning to the ranks, however, no loss of form was perceptible in his play. He is a powerful runner, a safe and determined tackler, and is already overcoming a tendency to individual action which threatened at first to militate against the utility of the three-quarter line of which he formed one of the hinges. But alas! he shines like a good deed in a naughty world. In fact, England has had almost as much difficulty in producing 'centre-three-quarters' as half-backs. Mr. Mackie is but a shred of his former self, and Mr. Bunting—one of the cleverest and most unselfish players that has yet been seen in this position—has suffered from want of practice in first-class games. The result has been that the wing three-quarter backs have been starved. It has not been an uncommon thing to witness a match in which such speedy and capable men as Mr. Robinson, Mr. Woodyatt, Mr. Wallis, Mr. Kingston, and Mr. F. A. Jackson have been taking part, and to see them leave the field without a real opportunity being afforded them of handling the ball. Mr. Pilkington, the Cambridge wing three-quarter, has certainly had a great season as regards the tries he has scored; but it is only fair to state that on very many of the occasions on which he has crossed the line the 'Varsity's opponents have been sides of distinctly second or even third-class form. In the bigger contests he has suffered like the others, and like them has on occasions paid the penalty for his neighbours' sins.

At full back Mr. Frank Byrne is still without a peer in the country. It would be a dangerous thing to say that he is better than ever; but he maintains his own form, and more cannot be said. Unfortunately, there seems to be no prospect at present of a capable understudy being forthcoming. A year ago Mr. Jones, the Notts cricketer, was an undoubted candidate for the post should circumstances prevent Mr. Byrne from taking the field; but he has now moved up into the three-quarter line. The change has been to the advantage of the Leicester Club, for whom he frequently scores, but it has possibly minimised his chance of receiving the coveted International cap. With the exception of Mr. Jones, the full-backs boast 'none else of name.'

The English forwards of 1897-98 are not a particularly

formidable lot. Mr. F. Jacob and Mr. Dudgeon, both old Internationals, stand out distinctly as the two best, but no player of the year can claim to rank with Messrs. Evershed, Bromet, or Sam Woods of the past, or with Mr. Frank Mitchell at his best. The Northern forwards have added nothing to their reputation. They have done a great deal of hard scrummaging; but they are deficient in ability to break up rapidly and in footwork, and are not above the average as tacklers. In fact, the committee of the Rugby Union deserve much sympathy for the difficulties which they were forced to meet in the selection of a side to represent England. The 'loyal minority' of the North had to be treated kindly, and expediency was as important a factor as judgment in their final decision. There cannot be a doubt that had the fifteen been chosen entirely from, say, the Richmond and Blackheath Clubs, a far stronger combination would have taken the field than was the case in the first International match. The Irish, Scotch, and Welsh Unions work more or less upon this principle. The teams that represent them are drawn from a few clubs, and combination, or at any rate a certain amount of combination, is thus ensured. That the plan has worked well, as regards merely the success of the side chosen, is without a doubt.

In the last five years England has lost far more International matches than she has won. On the other hand, had our Rugby Union adopted this line of action, there would have undoubtedly been a great outcry in the country. The truth is that the best interests of International and club football respectively are mutually inimical. Combination has now become the very essence of the game, and combination is almost impossible when the units of a side are drawn from nine or ten different sources. Yet to recruit them from some two or three would give mortal offence. The position is a difficult one. International football has but an occasional and transitory interest; county football, in the South at all events, attracts only a handful of spectators; whilst club football still easily holds the first place in popular estimation. This state of affairs is not so much due to a spirit of partisanship as to the desire of the public to see a good match, and it is a matter of notoriety that an International or a county contest is seldom, if ever, in point of merit up to the level of a good club game. The committee, therefore, are right not to sacrifice club interest to a desire to win an International match at all costs. The Rugby Union committee, however, merit something besides pity from those who are most vitally interested in the game.

The Gould question is now a matter of history, and squalid history at that. There is nothing to be gained by re-opening that controversy. From the first both sides showed a disposition to treat the subject in a lawyer-like form, and there should be no room for the lawyer in the football world. If the spirit of compromise which has lately been abroad had only manifested itself a little earlier, all the foolish bickering which has done so much to lower the standard of English football might have been avoided. Principles are terrible things, more especially when both sides are infallible. 'Nice customs curtsey to great kings,' said Henry V. to Katherine of France, when she refused him a kiss upon principle and precedent. But if she did not see the error of her ways, she at any rate tactfully withdrew her objection and gracefully yielded to his request. There was no lack of principle in her courteous acquiescence; and surely there has never been a greater king in the football world than Mr. Arthur Gould. Possibly the differences raised might have been adjusted but for the Rugby Union's famous edict which converted so many of us into professionals, though it gave us a distinguished comrade on the subscription list in Sir William Vernon Harcourt. The storm of ridicule which met the pronouncement in question has not yet died away. It is better to be bad than mad, and far sounder policy to be aggressive than foolish. Then followed the famous recantation which reinstated the backsliders, and Mr. Rowland Hill, to whom Rugby football owes so much, bore himself bravely in the *rôle* of St. Anthony. These are certainly matters of the past, but they must not be left out of consideration, as they have been the means of raising larger issues. The question which now confronts the Rugby Union is not whether Mr. Gould ought or ought not to have a testimonial, nor is it a question of whether under the circumstances Welsh International fixtures ought or ought not to be permanently resumed. The point which these gentlemen have now to settle is: 'Is there or is there not to be Rugby football (worthy the name) in England in the immediate future?'

The 'gate' is, of course, an indispensable factor in the continuance of the game. Statistics prove that public patronage is at present extended to football in the following proportion: seven-elevenths to Association, three-elevenths to the Northern Union, one-eleventh to games under the direction of the Rugby Union. Are we to lose our one ewe-lamb, or may we not legitimately hope to add to our flock? It matters little whether the Rugby Union Committee are right or wrong upon questions of principle

if the majority of their constituents are displeased with their action. The days of inner brotherhoods are past, and these gentlemen must be regarded as comprising a company of delegates rather than a committee of experts. It is no disrespect to them to say that some few are scarcely in touch with the modern requirements of the game. We have all of us a respect, which amounts almost to reverence, for the Ancient Britons. We marvel at what they were able to achieve with bow and spear, but, could we resurrect them now, we should scarcely select them as members of a court of inquiry convened to report upon the Lee-Metford rifle. There must be some who are weary of office, and who are willing to let younger men who are active participators in the game take their places. (King Rehoboam, be it noted, was singularly unfortunate in his experiences.) To such we would say: 'We thank you sincerely for your past services—we desire to accord you (we dare not breathe the word "testimonial") a hearty vote of thanks, and we wish you many years of well-merited leisure.'

Rugby football suffers from a glut of legislation, and those responsible for its fate have evidently no faith in the adage which bids us 'leave well alone.' Yet, though this is the case, there is much that could be done by influence rather than by law-making. It is essential in the face of competition, legal and illegal, that the game be made popular to the remnant of spectators who still pay their money to witness it. There is room for improvement in the matter of the referee. Undoubtedly one should not look a gift horse in the mouth; but if it could be tactfully indicated to the donor that the recipient would prefer a good horse to a bad one, the value of the present would be much enhanced.

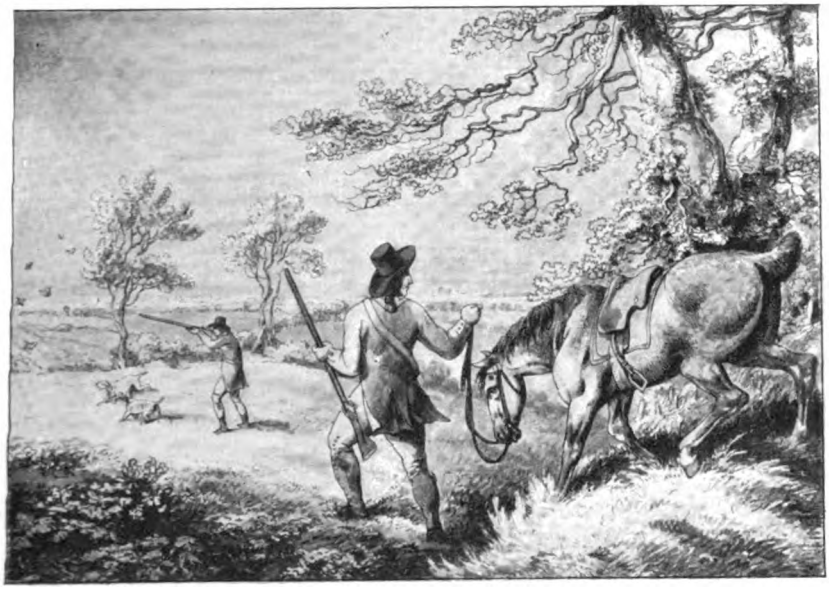
This suggestion is offered in all humility to the Rugby Union Committee and the Society of Referees. Perhaps these bodies may see their way to consider whether the good nature of some of the gentlemen who so kindly volunteer to perform a thankless and difficult task is not in excess of their capacity. Should they decide that such is the case, they may possibly make endeavours to improve a factor in the game in which the public take a far deeper interest than is generally imagined. It is not too much to say that the value of several first-class matches during the past season has been seriously discounted by the unnecessarily frequent and wanton interruptions of the man with the whistle.

It would be as ridiculous as it would be unjust to say that the difficulties that Rugby football is still encountering are due to the action of the Rugby Union Committee alone. The Inter-

national Board—a body composed of representatives from the four kingdoms—have done their part towards creating the 'slump.' However, it is with results that those interested in the game in England are mainly concerned. Generally speaking, no one believes in a policy of 'splendid isolation,' either in the football world or elsewhere. But if the action of the International Board becomes, even indirectly, hostile to the well-being of English club football, it will then be necessary for the English representatives to reconsider their position, as well as what may be described as their penalties of membership.

There is still much room in England alone for the game. It cannot be too strongly insisted upon that the fostering of good club football should be the main object upon which the authorities should concentrate their efforts. The clubs are willing enough to help themselves. The management, for instance, of the famous Blackheath organisation deserve the warmest thanks for their efforts, and hearty congratulations for the success that has attended them. But for their enterprise the attendance of the public at Metropolitan football would have shown an even sorrier figure during the past season than has been the case. Blackheath arranged a plucky and enterprising programme both at home and away, and had the satisfaction of winning an extraordinarily large number of their fixtures.

London clubs seldom put into the field in the New Year a side equal in strength to that which has represented them in the first half of the season, but Blackheath preserved their excellence right up to the bitter end. Their old time rivals the Richmond Club suffered much from the illness and injuries of leading members of their fifteen, as well as by absence occasioned by their inclusion in representative sides; but they kept up their reputation for brilliant forward play, and but for the almost unaccountable misunderstandings between their backs might have run Blackheath close for leading honours. As matters stand, however, they have a poor record for a side that furnished a third of the International team. The *clientèle* of amateur Rugby football is already small, but there is no reason why this state of things should continue. In the London district the Association game does not seriously exist, and there is no counter-organisation such as the Northern Union. Much can be done by the clubs themselves to swell their gates; but it especially behoves the central authority to speed the good cause, and to determine that, come what may, this sport shall not perish in the land.



WITH THE GUN IN NEW SOUTH WALES

BY WILLIAM REDMOND, M.P., B.L.

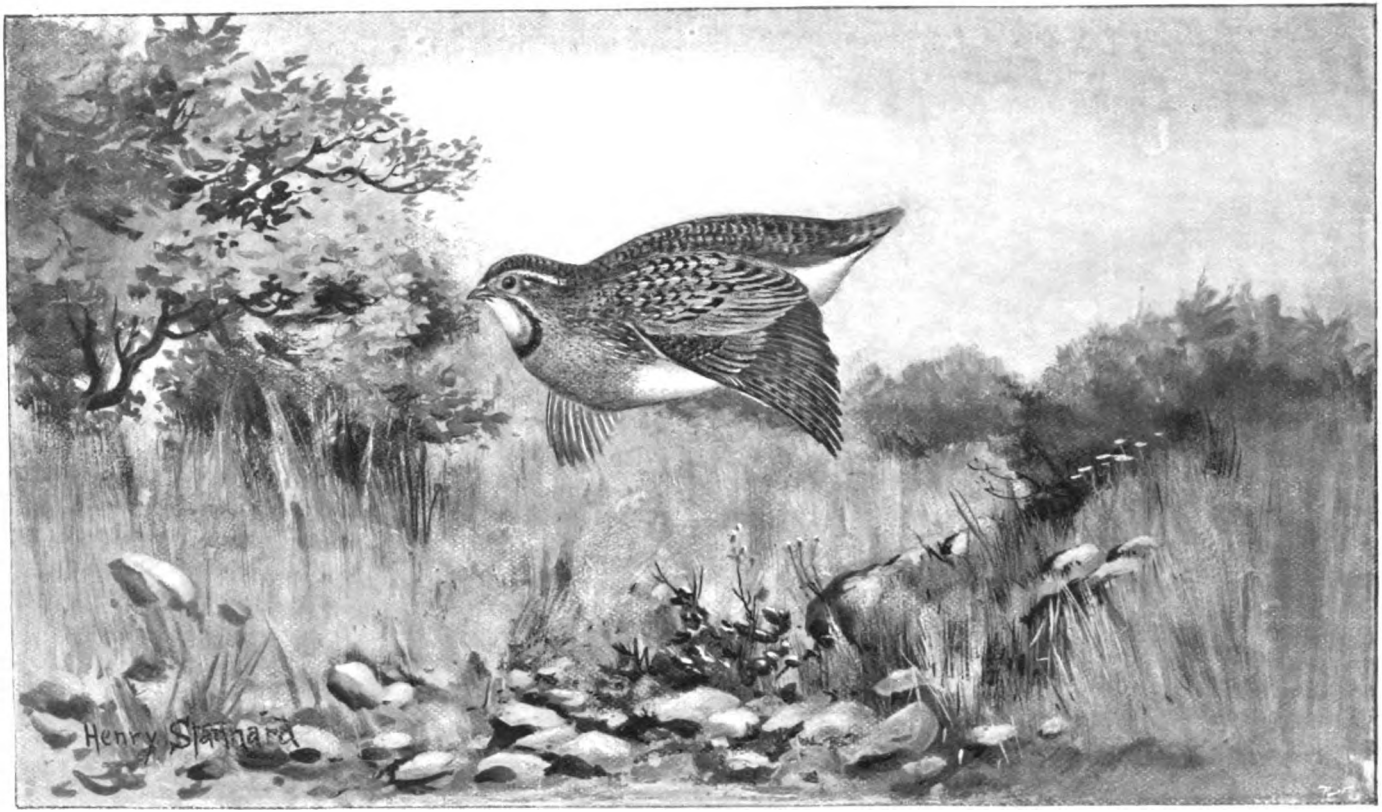
WE have had numberless accounts of shooting experiences in India and Africa, but comparatively little has been said, as far as I have observed, of the sport which is to be had with the gun in Australia. This prompts me to write the present paper, in the belief that at least some interest may be felt in the subject by those, and I fear they are many, to whom Australia is very little known. In the first place, let me say, Australia is a thoroughly sporting country. I can speak with some little authority on the matter, having made three prolonged visits to the other side of the world, and being closely connected with many people there. The average young Australian takes to sport as naturally as a duck takes to water. It does not matter what the form may be—riding or shooting, cricket or football, racing or rowing—it is the same thing, the young Australian takes kindly to them all. No doubt it is the eternal sunshine, the almost perpetual brightness of the atmosphere, the tendency to outdoor life, which has a great deal to do with popularising

sport in the Colonies. Whatever the reason may be, the fact remains, there is no branch of the English-speaking race more thoroughly devoted to sport than the Australians. Cricket has, perhaps, done more than anything else to impress this on people in England; and the recent victory of the Victorian Rifle Team in carrying off the Kolapore Cup at Bisley has given proof that the Australian can render as good an account of himself handling a rifle as a cricket-bat.

When comparing the merits of Australian cricket teams with English teams, it should be always borne in mind that whereas the Australian Eleven is drawn from a total population of four or five millions, the English Eleven is the pick of a population about eight times as great. Under these conditions, the wonder is that the Australians have held their own so well, and their many successes against the very best of English teams prove that all round they are second to none. In football as well as cricket the Australians are great. Football matches and cricket matches are far better attended in proportion in Australia than in England. At race meetings, practically the whole population turns out to witness big events; and Melbourne on the 'Cup' day is like a city deserted. Rich and poor, young and old, everybody flocks to the racecourse, and for weeks before and weeks afterwards the sole topic of conversation in every circle of society centres around the big horse race of the year. I have seen the streets in Sydney blocked from end to end in the neighbourhood of the newspaper offices by huge crowds patiently waiting for the first news of the winners.

It is well within the mark to assert that there is no country in all the world where so general an interest is taken in the Turf. Racing, cricket, and football may be found in any quantity; but to the man who is fond of his hunting in winter and his shooting in autumn the Colonies do not offer much attraction.

As far as shooting goes, there is much of a certain kind to be had, but you must do without your grouse and your partridges, and be satisfied with quail and duck Having just returned from a four months' visit to a station about six hundred miles up country from Sydney, I am able to supply some account of what sport the lover of the gun is afforded in that part of the world. Let me give a list of some of the birds in the bush of New South Wales which are considered fair game. There are duck of various kinds, there are quail and plover, there are pigeons in several varieties, there are the wild turkeys, and the mallee hens or native pheasants.



THE QUAIL

All of these, and other birds as well, but principally these, afford plenty of sport, and many a good day's shooting I have had deep in the bush with the temperature well up to 100° in the shade. First let me speak of the duck, several thousands of which are to be found along the rivers and creeks and water tanks of the New South Wales bush. The black duck is not only the finest game bird in Australia, but amongst the very finest in the world. It is a handsome bird too, and very good to eat—in fact, there is no greater delicacy to be had in Australia, and certainly none more generally appreciated.

Then the wood ducks are good shooting, and to the stranger it is a very curious sight to see a flock of them, after wheeling about overhead, settle upon the top branches of some tall tree, which they very often do when they are startled from the tank or creek, or wherever they may have been.

Widgeon and teal in considerable numbers are also to be had, and I have seen very good bags of them made more than once. Some of the tanks in the bush to hold the rainwater are very large, and they are generally surrounded by pretty high banks. It was on these tanks I got most of my duck shooting. The birds are, as a rule, very wary and hard to get within shot of, but as the water is very scarce they will regularly return to the tanks from which they are raised. In the case of some of the larger tanks the ducks will, in most cases, simply fly from one end to the other, so that with a few guns stationed up and down along the banks plenty of shooting is to be had.

The quail shooting in the bush reminded me of the partridges and September, though, indeed, it was a good deal warmer out there than September at home. The quail—there are several different varieties in the Colonies—get up very much in the same way as the partridge, and indeed the sport is much the same. We found the birds generally in the 'lucerne' paddocks, and wherever the grass was fairly long with some stubble in the vicinity. English setters were mostly used over quail in the district I visited, and the only unpleasant feature in connexion with a day's quail shooting in New South Wales is the uncomfortable feeling that one is quite likely to walk on top of some venomous snake while tramping through the long cover. There are any amount of reptiles of nearly every variety in the bush. If your dog approaches one, he will set it in a curiously trembling way, which will at once indicate what is there. The snakes in Australia are a regular curse, and though in the case of the bushman familiarity breeds contempt, it takes the visitor or

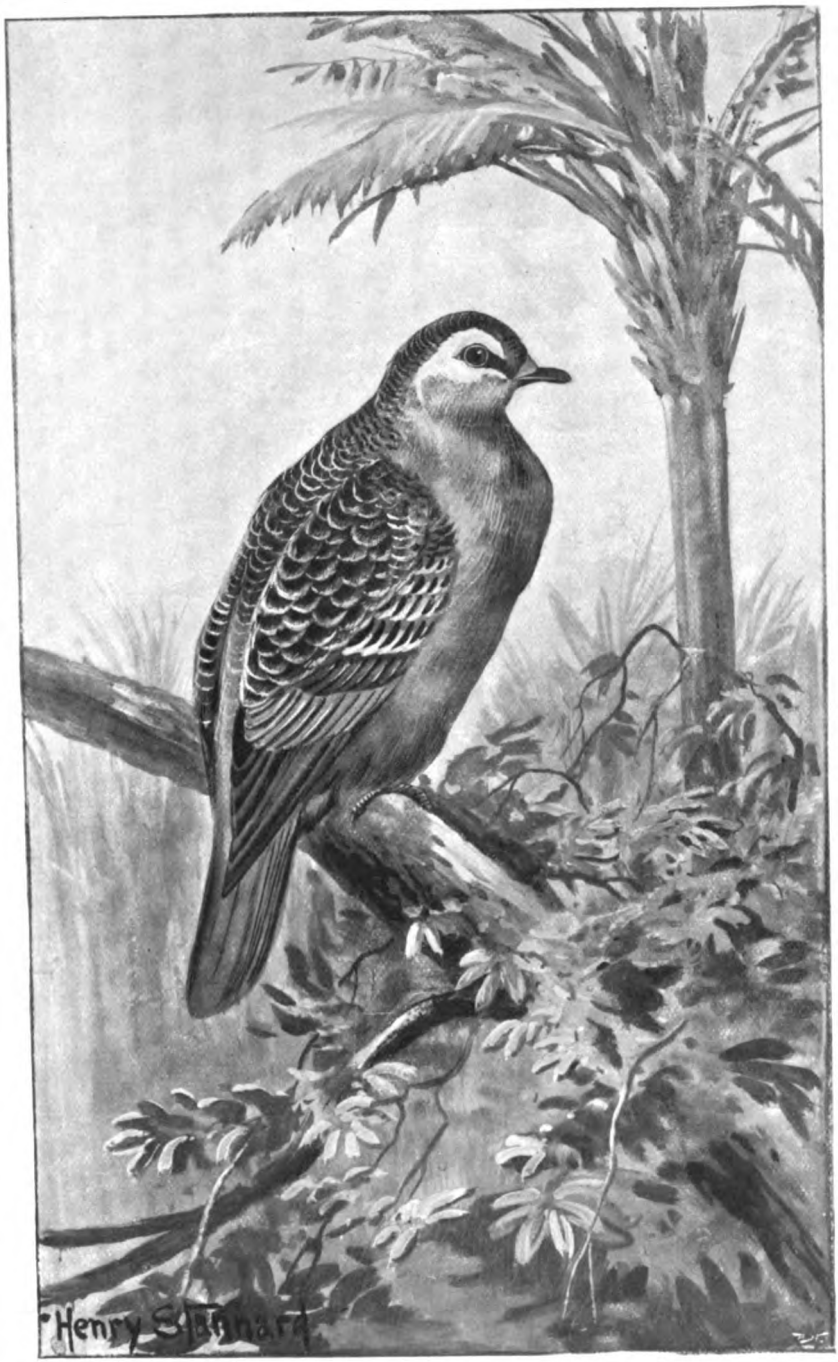
'new chum' some little time before he can tramp through the long grass without a strong inclination to pick his steps and examine carefully the ground in front of him.

The 'spur-wing' plover is found very generally through the bush, and to the stranger is a very interesting bird by reason of the little spur upon the joint of each of its wings. Perhaps, however, the nicest bird in all the bush is the bronzewing pigeon. In Australia there is a large variety of the pigeon tribe, but I should say the bronzewing easily takes first place. It is a fine-looking bird, and the tinting of its wings, which are of a glistening bronze colour, gives ample warrant for its name. Another pretty little bird is the top-knot pigeon. They fly at a most terrific pace, and are, like the bronzewing, not by any means easy to shoot. In places where the bush is pretty thick and dense, one has to be smart as smart can be to cover any of these pigeons; they flash past so quickly and disappear so suddenly in the branches round about. At sunset most of these birds, particularly the bronzewings, will be found hovering round tanks, and may be shot as they fly down to drink; but it soon gets dark in Australia when once the sun goes down, and it is not particularly inspiriting work lying by a tank waiting for a shot.

Of all the birds in Australia in the way of game the wild turkey perhaps affords the greatest novelty to the stranger in the way of shooting. In the first place it is such a large bird, and so completely unlike anything we have to shoot at home. No idea can be formed of the Australian wild turkey by any comparison with the ordinary turkey upon which we are so fond of regaling ourselves at Christmas. There is hardly anything in common between the birds, certainly nothing in appearance. The wild turkey is very majestic-looking as you see him stalking along through the long grass with slow and stately step. It is almost impossible to get near enough to him for a shot on foot or even on horseback, but strangely enough he will let you get well up if you happen to be driving, and all that I saw shot were shot from a trap. They are good eating, but even a few of them form a very inconvenient bag to carry, for their size and weight are enormous, some scaling as much as 25 lb.

The wild turkey is said to be one of the birds rapidly becoming extinct in Australia. However this may be in the district of New South Wales which I visited, I saw a good many myself, and heard from various quarters that they were fairly plentiful. It would be a pity if the wild turkey disappeared from Australia, where the loss of game birds can be ill afforded.

But the most interesting bird in the whole bush, and, indeed,



THE BRONZEWING EASILY TAKES FIRST PLACE

in my opinion, it is also one of the most wonderful birds in the whole world, is the mallee hen or native pheasant. This belongs to the family of mound-builders, which lay their eggs underground, where they are hatched by the heat of the earth. The first time I came across one of the mallee hen's nests, I was fairly astonished, and until I saw the eggs actually produced I could hardly believe that they were really there. These nests or mounds of earth are of different sizes. The one which I first came across was, I believe, a very exceptionally large one. I was riding home through the bush after a day's shooting, when one of the friends who accompanied me pointed to a large heap of earth, and told me that it was a mallee hen's nest. As I had heard a good deal of the curious habits of the native pheasant, and was anxious to see for myself one of its nests, we dismounted and proceeded to search for the eggs. This particular nest, as I have said, was an exceptionally large one; we measured it, and found that in circumference it was sixty or seventy feet, and gradually rose to about four feet high in the centre. At the edges all sorts of little stones and branches and every kind of débris were scattered about. At the centre or top of the mound my companion, who was a thorough bushman, drew my attention to the fact that a small circle was formed by little twigs or small branches sticking up out of the earth. These we found were planted directly over the eggs, but there seemed to be a difference of opinion as to what they were there for. Some bushmen to whom I have spoken held the opinion that the twigs were planted in this way to cause ventilation, while others believed that their use was to form a guide by which the young birds, when the shells broke, might find their way to the surface of the mound. The young of the mallee hen, I should here mention, leave the shell fully fledged, and how they work their way up through the earth that is over them is one of the wonders of the bush. Some people say that the old birds help them out; others again, as I have mentioned above, hold that the young work their own way up through the earth, guided by the little branches which I have described. However this may be, the whole thing is wonderful—wonderful that the young should leave the shell fully fledged, and wonderful that these little shafts formed by branches should be placed by the old birds so as to reach from the surface of the mound right down to the eggs. The mallee hens are extremely timid birds—in fact, it is hard at any time to come up with them. I have heard of men lying out at night by the nests for the purpose of watching how the eggs are laid. Many have seen the mallee hens at work,

scraping away with their feet to get down deep enough to deposit the eggs, and they have been observed covering them up, but I did not hear of any really authentic account as to how the young ones reached the surface, or whether they were helped out by the old birds.

Let me give some account now of the experience which I had at the large nest which I have described. Having tied up our horses, one of my companions set to to scoop away with his hands the earth from the centre of the mound. He worked away for about ten minutes, very cautiously, towards the end, so as not to break the eggs when he reached them. As I sat upon one side smoking and watching the huge hole that was being made, I could hardly bring myself to believe that any bird could lay eggs under such a heap of earth. By-and-bye, however, my companion's labours were rewarded by finding the eggs. There they were, and a very large number of them, placed apparently at regular intervals more or less on their ends. They were of a pinkish colour as well as I remember, and in size something like a goose's egg—if anything, a little larger. That these huge nests are used by a number of birds is, I believe, now a well-authenticated fact. In this nest of which I speak there were a large number of eggs, and apparently in every stage of incubation. We broke open a few; some evidently had been laid quite recently, others were far advanced, while from one shell which broke directly it was touched a young bird fell out fully fledged. It was very wonderful to behold. These young mallee hens fly in a few months, but the feathering on them directly they leave the shell is perfect.

We covered in the remaining eggs carefully, leaving the little circle of twigs just as we had found it, and I for one rode away much impressed by the strange habits of the Australian native pheasant. These birds are called 'mallee hens' because they mostly inhabit the mallee scrub, long belts of which are to be found in certain portions of the bush. In size, the mallee hen is, I should judge, something larger than our own pheasants, the hen birds of which they somewhat resemble in colour. The flesh of the native pheasant is white and pleasant to taste. I have seen a number of them shot, though it is not by any means easy to bring them down, as they run like lightning through the dense scrub, and even when they take to the wing it is very hard to cover them, the mallee bush is so thick.

There are plenty of snipe to be had in certain portions of the

THERE ARE PLENTY OF SNIPE TO BE HAD

bush, but this is the only home game bird, excepting, of course, the duck, that I came across in New South Wales.

With non-game birds Australia literally teems. Parrots of every conceivable hue flash from tree to tree screaming and chattering as you ride along. Huge flocks of cockatoos of both the black and white species circle overhead in the blue sky. The clear note of the bell-bird rings through the bush mingled with the flute-like tones of the magpie, while the whistling and twittering of hundreds of different small birds fall upon the ear with a bewildering effect. There is nothing more wonderful than the multiplicity of strange sounds to be heard in the deep bush. The district where I did most of my shooting is between five and six hundred miles from Sydney and a hundred miles from any railway. Very few people lived within a radius of twenty miles, and yet it was impossible, in spite of the absence of almost all trace of humanity, to feel lonely, for the bush is alive with wonderful sights and sounds of animal and bird life.

When night settles down, and nothing is to be heard but the notes of the owl or the persistent croaking of the frogs, it is dismal enough; but in daytime, when the glorious sun bursts out, and the thousand voices of the bush break the silence, no one who really loves nature can feel very much alone.

In this brief sketch I have given some account of what the lover of the gun may find to engage him amongst the feathered tribes of Australia. With the animal life in the bush the shooter will not find much excitement; for the kangaroo, the wallaby, and the native bear offer very little sport. The native bears and wallabies are so tame that shooting them seems almost like murder, and even kangaroo shooting in a district where they are fairly plentiful one soon gets tired of. There is with regard to all Australian animals an absence of that tinge of danger which makes big-game shooting so fascinating both in India and Africa. Of emus there are plenty to be had in the bush, but though they are wary and hard to come within shot of, they cannot be said to afford much in the way of sport. Though Australia cannot be said to boast of any wild animals, still, for those who are fond of the rifle, there is a good deal of mild excitement and amusement to be had in kangaroo stalking. These animals have been pretty well exterminated in many districts of Australia, for the war carried on against them, because of the value of their skins, has been relentless and untiring. Nevertheless, in the 'back-blocks' the kangaroos are fairly plentiful, and the day when this peculiarly Australian animal

will become extinct is very far distant indeed. Some of the full-grown kangaroos are splendid looking, and I have seen them in some cases well over five feet in height. The pace at which they bound along is simply astonishing. They are wary enough, and in any kind of open country a good deal of caution is required to get a satisfactory shot. At one station where I stayed in rather a remote district a very large paddock of some hundreds of acres was situated near the house; it was enclosed all round by a pretty high wire fence, and entrance to it was only to be had by a couple of gates, one at each end. One night we gave orders to have these gates left open till close upon daylight, when we sent one of the men stealthily out to close them. After breakfast, taking our rifles we strolled down to the paddock and enjoyed the best day's shooting of the kind I ever had. Under cover of night any number of kangaroos and wallabies had come in from the surrounding bush to enjoy the richer grass which the cleared paddock afforded. We had shooting to our hearts' content, and inside of a couple of hours had delighted the squatter by the number of animals destroyed; for your squatter is not in love with the kangaroo, which eats too much of his grass.

It was not kangaroo only we got that morning in the paddock; there were lots of that smaller specimen of the marsupial, the wallabies, and as for the hares, they were literally to be had in any quantity. It is hard for one who has never experienced it to realise what hare shooting is in the bush, the creatures are so numerous. The districts which I visited were practically free from the rabbit plague, as the result of a long course of extermination and the erection of hundreds of miles of rabbit-proof fencing —a very costly piece of work, as may be easily imagined when it is remembered that wire has to be put up not only over the ground but several feet under it as well.

Of course, shooting in an enclosed space such as this paddock I speak of simply amounts to slaughter. To get on your horse and follow a lot of kangaroos over the ranges till you get your chance of a shot is more exciting; but really, as I have said, animal shooting in the bush is not at any time satisfactory sport. The native bears simply make no effort to escape at all. An old bear holding on to the branch of a gum-tree will calmly gaze down upon you in such a thoroughly confiding and innocent manner as almost to make the gun drop from your hands. I shot an old bear once, but he was my first and last; he came down from a high branch with a crash, and screamed as he lay

rolling upon the ground in such a pitiful way that it really seemed as if somebody were trying to murder a whole nursery full of children. I believe there is no animal in the world which makes such a plaintive outcry as the Australian native bear.

Opossum shooting at night in the bush is a novel experience in its way, but here again you shoot the little fellow as he crouches quietly on the branch of a tree, and I never could quite get over the feeling that it was something like potting cats off the roof of a house.

Speaking of cats, by the way, the native cats in Australia are vicious little fellows, but worth bagging for the splendid rugs which their skins make. Of all the animals in the bush, the only one at all approaching savageness is the dingo, or native dog; but such a merciless war has been waged upon this creature for his habit of slaughtering sheep, that he is very seldom to be met with in any district where there are settlers. I have never seen one wild myself, but riding through some of the more remote parts of the station I visited, I saw several of their grinning skeletons hanging from the branches of trees, where they had been placed as a warning of the fate which always awaits the dingo at the hands of the sheep farmer.

ROUNDING UP BIRDS

BY W. PAINE

For the last week or so the 'Baas' has been muttering to himself 'High time the "burrds" came up,' and at last the fiat has gone forth, and to-morrow the birds are to be chased out of their native veldt, out of their thorny fastnesses in the vlei, or in mountain kloof, herded together, driven up to the homestead kraal, and there despoiled of their plumes. And in preparation for this event two Kaffirs have been mounted and sent down to the big camp to bring up the horses, for every available horse and every spare man will be wanted for to-morrow's work. I saunter down to the big camp gate to see them come in. It is a pretty sight. They are chiefly brood mares, utterly wild, have never looked through a halter in their lives, with long manes and tails, some heavy with foal, some with foals at heel, some ugly as sin, others as handsome as you could wish for, with here and there a two-year-old filly and a yearling colt. Now and then one can see the white saddle-marks that denote the riding horse.

I let down the rails, and led by a wicked-looking 'Prince Charley' filly they charge through, with much snorting and lashing out, in a cloud of dust. Up in the big cattle kraal, where they have gone to, the catching out of the saddle horses is beginning. A clump of mares are driven with much rock-

heaving, whip-cracking, and vituperative eloquence into a small catching kraal. One man stands at the gate, or where the gate would be if the rails were up, and half a dozen more, armed with halters, bridles, &c., plunge into the seething, whirling maëlstrom of excited horseflesh and 'catch out' the riding horses. The man at the gate has an ugly time of it, as the mares make determined efforts to rush the exit, and should he flinch a foot they grass him. The walls are six feet high and built of loosely packed stone, and even then I have seen a handsome black mare, whose foal had been left outside, clear out of the kraal with a standing leap. I am aware that I am laying myself out to a grave charge of exaggeration by this statement, but the fact remains, and the mare also, with an ugly white mark on her off forehand where she scattered the top layer of stones. The riding horses caught, they are put into a tin-roofed brick-walled stable, with a long manger running down one side.

It is getting on for evening, and I stroll down to have a look at them. Throwing open the wooden shutter that does duty as a window, I lean my elbows on the sill and look in. Directly in front of me I can distinguish the grey horse Tempest, the horse I shall ride to-morrow. For sheer, ungainly ugliness Tempest takes the palm, and by the same token for heart-staying power and speed, there is not another horse on the place to hold a rush-light to him—Tempest, who carried me five hours' journey in four hours' time without being pushed, who ran down, with fourteen stone up, the stall-fed stallion 'Comet' when he was clearing for the lone veldt, inside a mile and a half. One could never ask too much of that grey, and, what was more, he never showed temper. On his right is the big Roman-nosed chestnut, who, when he behaves himself, is a really nice mount, but he is a crafty and wily bucker, with a long-standing feud against all humans. Twice have I been 'skied' off his long roach back, and twice the evil brute sought to kneel on my prostrate chest afterwards, but was prevented. Next to him stands the 'swet vos' or dark chestnut, another of Prince Charley's stock, a big, upstanding, big-boned four-year-old, a holy terror at times, through bad breaking.

On the other side of Tempest is the Tinker, and in contrast to that matchless horse the Tinker is a thing of beauty.

Long and low with nice, hard, neat legs, good quarters, and head that tells of some Arab ancestor, yet the Tinker is a coward, and a vicious coward to boot, with a trick of pitching backwards when displeased. In the dim twilight the others are scarcely

distinguishable, but the shrill squeal and the thud of unshod hoofs tells me where Marie, the kicker, is located.

Next morning is a typical South African day, glorious with sunshine and blue sky, with perhaps now and then a soft breath of wind to mitigate the heat. A light breakfast at seven o'clock and I go out to saddle up. Abraham, the head boy, half-bred Mozambique and Dutch, is laying out the saddle outside the harness-room, testing girths, and patching up bridles and stirrup leathers; for the resources of the place in saddlery are somewhat taxed on occasions like this. Up come two Kaffirs, Tom and Selant, brothers, two of the most trustworthy honest boys I have ever met. They select their bridles and demand of Abraham what horses they shall take. Tom has the kicking mare, Selant the 'swet vos.'

Ever since Marie stove in two of my ribs I have always had a sneaking dislike for the stable full of loose horseflesh, and so, diving under the Blood-Rake's head I gain the manger and walk down it with my eyes strained in the gloom for a sight of the grey's head. What a pandemonium it is, an equine Inferno, murky and stifling! An indescribable noise of hoofs, snortings, squealings, and Kaffirs shouting is heard, the idea being that execrations, when delivered at the top of a not over-sweet voice, have a soothing effect on horses or anything. A tossing sea of manes, glaring eyeballs, and ears eloquent of fear or mischief, a dull thud and a flow of oath, tell me that the yellow cob has got one home, and then I sight Tempest standing in modest retirement at the very bottom of the stable sniffing uneasily. He sees me and starts to sidle round. I jump off the manger, but he dashes past, and the big chestnut, coming round with the swirl, bumps me heavily with his shoulder. I yell out 'Hang on to the grey!' and Selant, who has just captured his mount, bags Tempest with the slack of his rein round his neck. Having saddled up outside, the Baas, leading his mare Cara, the prettiest, handsomest beast on the place, comes up and tells us off for our work. To me is apportioned Tom and the 'outer round.' This requires a little explanation. The Big Camp is an immense place, several thousand 'morgen' in extent, surrounded by stone walls and wire fences in rough octagonal shape, the side farthest from the gate, bounded by a spur of the Sneuuwbergen. The line of horsemen sweeps the birds from the Karroo veldt and the uplands that lie to the north of the camp into the thorns in the south of the vlei, or valley, where they are 'mobbed' together and brought up to the gate. The outer round meant, therefore,

'SKIED' OFF HIS LONG ROACH BACK

the longest way round, the rough bits of the hill slopes and the vicious bird in the mountain kloof for certain. At the Big Camp gate we start off, each for his post in the line, and Tom and I bear north-east, following the wall. The vlei ground underneath is spongy and soft, the horses fresh, the air beautiful, and life is a very grand thing indeed—for the present moment. We pass the water-holes and disturb great flocks of geese, black duck, teal, snipe, and sandpiper, and here and there a solitary heron, hammerkop, or flaminx. Further on, where the land rises to the left, a flock of blue cranes and a troop of graceful springbuck, startled and staring, are snuffing the air for our wind. Here we pass meerkat burrows with their grotesque inhabitants barking and scolding at the burrow mouths, and there is a secretary bird seeking what he may devour.

We go on past clumps of lazy trek oxen and cattle and knots of wild mares, who throw their heads and gallop off kicking and bucking, and then wheel about to stare.

There are no vicious birds up here where we are now; they raise their wings and trot away gently as we drive them outward from the wall to where the man on the yellow cob passes them to his fellows in the centre, to go down to the thorns and wait there till the whole, or as many as can be obtained, are mobbed and brought up.

Now we are in the rough ground of the hill slopes. The 'Bergen' rise above us in with great 'krantz' faces, passionless and sphinx-like. Cape tigers and 'luipaards' inhabit these slopes, rhebuck and klipspunyer the summits, and at the foot we turn up the graceful steinbuck, smallest of antelopes. Baboons howl and cough at us from the krantzes, and the klip dassies join in the chorus like scolding women. Here it is that the jackals sit in the moonlight and howl at the spooks of the dead, who are supposed to rendezvous here o' nights—at least, so Tom says.

The birds are loth to leave their ground and give trouble hereabouts, and the work begins in earnest.

Deep dry sluits intersect the ground, ant-bear holes gape, hideous man-traps for the rash horseman. One by one the obstructionists are driven down into the vlei, and we press on for the 'old man' in the kloof. Vicious birds are of sorts: most birds will hustle round a man on foot, making up their minds whether to charge or not; others will do the same to unaccompanied horsemen, and so on in degrees; but there were three or four 'mannikies' in the camp who would charge on

sight straight as a line and swift as a two-year-old; and the old man in the kloof was one.

We gain the kloof: it is chock-full of scrub and rhue-mar-fang-nee bushes, coarse mountain grass, and weeds.

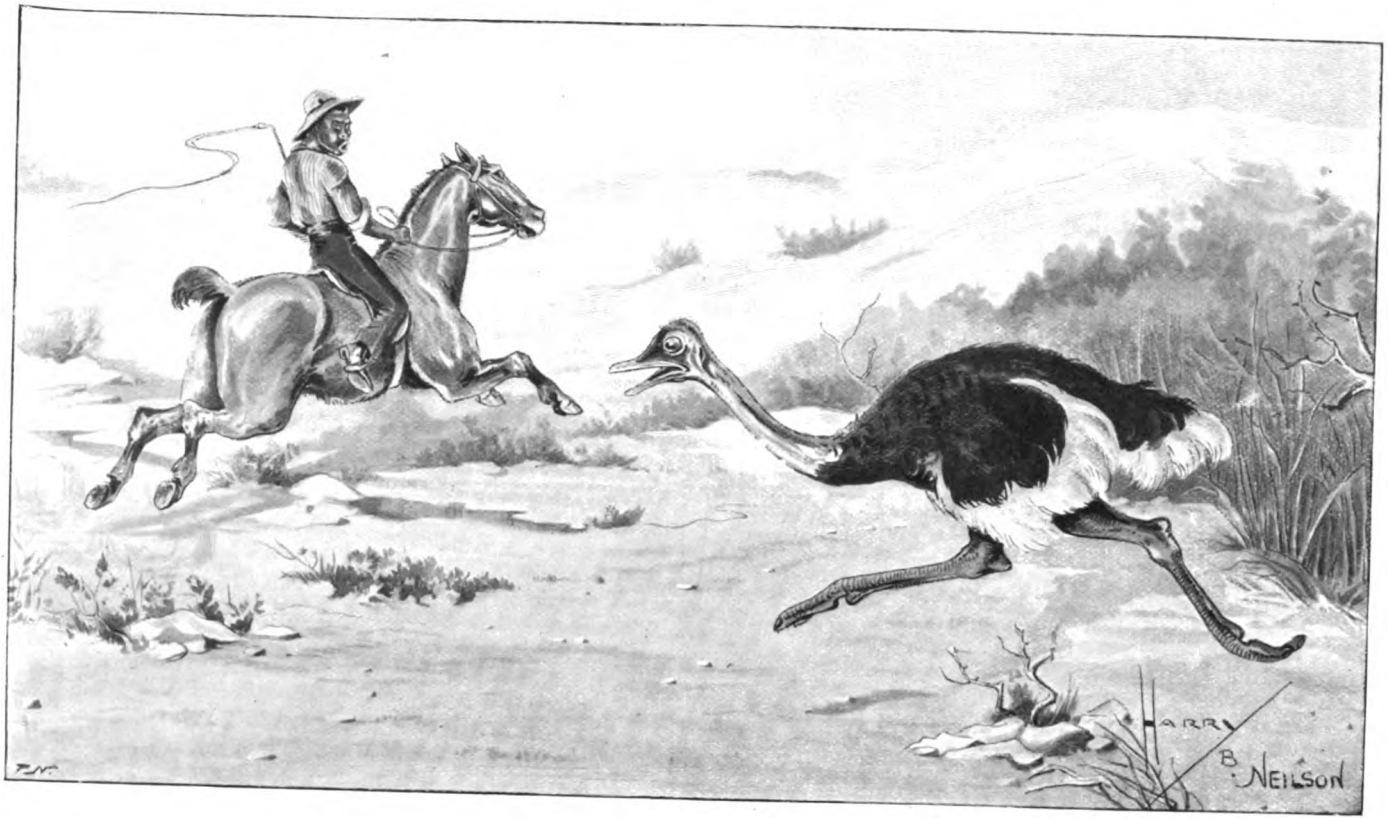
Tom raises his whip and voice, and the mountain answers his shout in ricochetting echoes. A long snake-like head shoots out of the tangled growth, and I grip my saddle and gather my reins for the contest with a curious sinking in the epigastrium. But the bird climbs out on the opposite side and trots away. 'Why, he's quite peaceful!' I exclaim. 'What's up?' But Tom shakes his head. 'That's another one, Baas—a young bird.'

We proceed up the kloof, Tom shouts once more, and then, as a loathsome gorged bird flaps heavily up, followed by two more, 'keke dee aasvogel,' and we find the old fighting bird a half-eaten mass of carrion. Peace to his bones! He was a game old chap in his day.

We sweep on mile after mile along the breezy uplands till we drop on to the 'vlei,' and jumping the big sluit find ourselves in the 'thorns' with the hardest half of the day before us. Now the whole plan of operations so scattered before becomes visible, the birds dotted about over a mile of country with the line of horsemen holding them off the high ground. Everything is ready, and the Baas with a wave of his hat gives the signal to draw the thorns. But the birds object; they have been hustled enough before, and the fun starts with a vicious cock charging the man on the yellow cob. A chorus of 'pas oop' from the boys, and 'Take care of your horse, you —— fool!' from the Baas, and the yellow cob leaps aside as the angry bird rushes past. Tom and I and two others gallop up to his assistance. But the arrival of reinforcement doesn't deter the old hidalgo in the least. His wicked eyes glinting, 'ruffling consumedly' with his wings, he comes again. A thorn bush is shoved under his jaw, blows pour in from all sides, a cruel cut over the head 'mazes' him, and bleeding and angry, he is forced back, scragged by the neck and overpowered.

And so on, up and down, left and right, at a continuous gallop, we worry along, with the thorns switching across the face and tearing at our legs, horses swerving and jumping over holes and sluits, and stumbling over the roughness of the sun-baked ground.

The ground yawns underneath us suddenly, disclosing a 'blind' sluit, but the grey heaves his big shoulders over it in his stride. A crash on my right and I know instinctively that the mare has



THE YELLOW COB LEAPS ASIDE AS THE ANGRY BIRD RUSHES PAST

'dropped her nose into it.' Down the wind comes the voice of the Baas in strident accents, sending someone to the country 't'other side o' Styx!' Above is the sun, blistering and merciless.

But the old grey, though the others are weakening, is to the fore always. With the reins on his neck and his ugly head stretched out, he gallops and turns to and fro, working like a sheep-dog. With him Tikky, the bay, Moscow, the old shooting horse, and the 'swet vos' are doing their share honestly, but the Tinker has struck work and is rearing and being chastised. The rest are objecting too, not to the work exactly, but their tempers, never sweet at the best, have gone to the four winds in shreds. And can you wonder at it? Galloped hard, checked with no gentle hand, pulled on their haunches, swung round and hit to make them spring off immediately over ground that would puzzle a mule to keep his feet. Every now and then a bird makes a dash out of the mob, and perhaps gets away, but probably is headed after a bursting gallop.

And so we work them up past the Rooi koppies and come near the gate. Within 500 yards of the gate the pace quietens down; the birds trot peaceably up the green 'vlei' valley. Near the gate with great care they are halted; here two men dismount quietly to put the rails down and lead through to flank the mob up to the home kraal. A stampede now would be fatal. The horsemen close up, and the raw-hide whip-thongs fly in with low, snapping shots at the legs, the hind birds press on the front, with slow, dignified steps the front birds take the opening, and the mob passes through.

The crisis is over. A straight run up to the home kraal and the draw is safe; and Jan hops off the sweating Tinker to put the rails up with a sigh of relief.

ENGLISH CRICKET ON AUSTRALIAN GROUNDS

BY W. J. FORD

'OUT-BOWLED and out of luck' will probably be the verdict of Stoddart's men on their return from Australia. Bad luck, however, and even a continuance of it, is one of the ills to which cricketing flesh is heir, and though it is a convenient peg on which to hang an excuse, it is so much part and parcel of the game that, galling as it is, it must not be regarded in too serious a light. 'Out-bowled' has far more to do with the various disasters to the side, and to the fact that the Australian bowlers are 'cleverer on their own wickets, and make the ball do more,' the failure of the Englishmen is due. On English wickets, against English bowling, and in English weather, Stoddart's side is undoubtedly the best that has ever sailed southwards; but they have failed to adapt themselves to a variation of weather and of tactics, and as the Australians have been lucky enough to have had the opportunity of treating them to the 'wearing-down' game in the majority of the matches, we must not be too much surprised at results. It is no fun to lose the toss with the knowledge that that loss implies two sweltering days in the field under a blazing sun, with a heart-breaking aggregate to face. If anyone thinks that 'heart-breaking' is too strong a term to use, let him look at the figures piled up in the test matches by the toss-winners. Here they are, and they form a very pretty study—551, 520, 573, 323, and 335. Taking the other eleven-a-side matches,

we find that the winners of the toss have scored such trifles as 311, 409, 415, 636, and 306; so that the Englishmen, who have been most unfortunate in the up-turn of the coin, have generally had a pretty good gruelling in an exceptionally hot summer before their turn for batting came round.

So much for the luck of the thing, which must be written off as being the 'bad debts' of the concern. Let us look at the cricket pure and simple. The fielding may be summed up as 'six of one and half a dozen of the other;' at least, if my score was 99, I should be very sorry to see a catch, however difficult, going towards any man on either side. In batting we are exceptionally powerful, stronger, man for man, till we reach the tail, than the enemy, if opposed to identical bowling; but here the trouble comes in—the bowling is not identical. The Australian batsmen who have made big scores against Hearne, Richardson and Co. have not been conspicuously successful against their brethren-in-arms in intercolonial matches, so that it is fair to conclude that in the extra skill of the bowlers lies the undoubted superiority shown by the Australians in the series of matches which is now, with the final disaster of the fifth test match, nearly concluded. We read of Howell as having the pace and accuracy of Hearne, and the power of making the ball break right across the wicket. This is quite above our English form when the cast-iron wickets of Australia are taken into consideration; for though an enormous break is not always a *desideratum*, yet a bowler who has this weapon in his armoury, and can produce it as occasion requires, is indeed a fearsome foe. I venture to think that the command of the *amount* of break is a point not sufficiently studied by English bowlers. To mention a few names, F. R. Spofforth, Alfred Shaw, J. T. Hearne, and A. G. Steel defeated the batsmen more by the regulation of the break than by the amount of it, and this power of regulation is, in Howell's case, clearly the secret of success. I remember having a chat with A. Shaw on the subject, and he told me that he believed he could make the ball break as much as any man in England, but that he only tried to do so occasionally, as by concealing the power he could hypnotise the batsman into a state of false security till the extra bit of work wrecked the wicket.

The general condition of the turf on English grounds, soaked even in the best seasons at not infrequent intervals, always leaves and always will leave a slight margin in the bowler's favour; which margin will never exist in Australia, where twenty-four hours of sunshine will obliterate the effects of the most conscien-

tious 'Southerly buster' that ever broke over Melbourne. Australian bowlers consequently have to adopt every *ruse*, known and unknown, to defeat the batsmen; and as the latter, with plenty of time at their disposal, will not 'nibble at the off-ball' in the hope of forcing the game, they must be fairly and squarely defeated, instead of being lured on to suicide. In fact, if a non-bowler like myself may be allowed to summarise the question, English bowlers try to induce the batsman to get himself out instead of trying to get him out themselves. George Lohmann was a notable exception. But I should like to add that on English wickets, and with a time limit, the game is not played here under the same conditions as in Australia. The conditions differ as much as do the old P.R. rules from the Queensberry system.

After this prosy disquisition on bowling, I must be allowed a momentary digression to Australian cricket grounds, even though my personal experience is but limited. The Melbourne ground reminded me, some ten or twelve years ago, of nothing so much as an extra-fast 'Fenner's.' It was as fast as lightning, and no bowlers that I came across in second-class cricket could make the ball do anything worth speaking of. In Sydney things were different. In a match I watched between Australia and Shaw's team, the ball seemed instinct with animation, and several times Spofforth's fast deliveries jumped right over the heads of batsman and wicket-keeper, even Jack Blackham—if memory serves me—paying the bowler the compliment of standing deep. But in those days two wickets (or even more, I believe) were used in Sydney for a big match. Since then the ground has been relaid, and is so much like our grounds that an Australian critic gave his opinion, before the result, that the Englishmen would be his choice in Sydney at 6 to 4, while he would lay evens at Adelaide or Melbourne. Hence it is clear that the grounds are changing in character, though perhaps *nos non mutamur in illis*. Certain it is that when the Australians are in England their batsmen seldom shine when the wickets help the bowler; though the crack English performers find themselves able to make respectable headway against even the best of bowling—that is, they score twenties and thirties in lieu of seventies and hundreds. Another point against our batsmen is, to my mind, their endeavour to adopt the Australian methods when on Australian grounds. Even if their natural freedom of style is hampered by the fine bowling, that freedom should not altogether disappear, and it is indeed curious to read of Maclaren's 'scraping up 109' (his own ex-

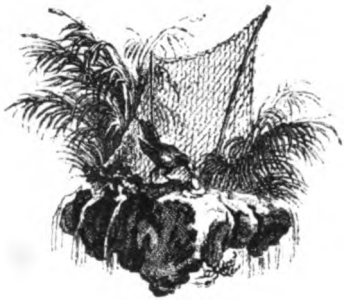
pression), and of Storer taking two hours over forty or fifty runs. To this question there are, of course, two sides, and it is hardly possible to judge accurately at a distance; but I should very much like to see how far the Australian bowlers would succeed in cramping a Jessop or a Thornton. Stoddart has never been quite himself since his first trip, and many good judges attribute the falling-off to his adoption of a less free, and consequently less natural, style.

One thing leads to another, and I cannot help thinking that slow cricket leads up to a disorderly and impatient 'ring.' The crowd come partly to see their favourites win, and in a larger degree to get some fun for their money, so when cricket rules dull, spectators are apt to wax rowdy. The Melbourne 'larrikin' and the Sydney 'hoodlum' are no respecters of persons, and when they wax facetious they wax personal, their personalities being of a particularly straightforward nature. Here is an instance. When Maclaren was playing with Stoddart's last team, he was fielding 'out in the country' on the Sydney ground. Someone made a big hit straight to him, and while he was waiting for the ball to fall into his hands, a voice from behind shouted, 'Miss it, Archie, and I'll let you kiss my sister!' 'Archie' was too old a hand to be put off. A similar thing happened to me at Lord's, where, just as the ball was getting unpleasantly close, a rascal in the crowd yelled 'Now!' However I was 'more than seven' at the time. Let me get back to the point I wanted to make, viz. that personalities from the crowd are apt to upset men whose nerves are very keenly strung, perhaps with a deadweight of runs against them; and it cannot be much fun to emerge from the pavilion knowing that the outburst of generous applause will be followed by a roar of chaff not in the best taste. That a public apology was tendered to Ranjitsinhji for the behaviour of the Adelaide crowd proves that things went a little too far there. Yet such things have happened over here. In a county match at Sheffield our umpire gave Lockwood out; it was not a good decision, and the crowd, taking the matter into its own hands, for the last ten minutes of the innings shouted in unison, 'How's that?' after every ball, with a unanimity worthy of the Ephesians. At the end of the innings they invaded the ground and made a narrow lane, by which we walked back to the pavilion amid shouts of 'Go back to London, you something cockneys!' and we had to form a little phalanx to save Nixon, the umpire, from possible assault and battery. To give 'the Blades' their due, the whole matter was at once forgotten, and

they proved themselves excellent sportsmen in the generosity of their applause while we were batting; but that didn't affect me, as I 'bagged a brace.'

However, this little digression is not intended to convey the idea that a somewhat ribald crowd's behaviour caused the loss of a match, or even of a wicket; but the booing of a man who is in the slight state of nervousness incidental to the approach of the first ball is not quite the same thing as booing the fieldsman who makes a mistake, and in this latter item the Australians themselves fared no better than the Englishmen. On the ideal cricket ground there would be no booing, as the operation cannot be without its effects on the most seasoned performer. Climatic influences have been urged as an excuse for the Englishmen, and these are influences which cannot be entirely ignored, though the 'heat-ray' seems to have operated as severely on one side as on the other. It was undoubtedly bad that the Northerners should meet the Southerners in an exceptionally trying season, and that the balance of luck from accidents, throats and illnesses, should be on the side of the Australians, for I cannot help feeling that the general run of fortune has been against Stoddart and his men. But the main cause of the series of disasters has been the inferiority of the bowling, and especially the failure of the second line of bowlers. Hearne and Richardson have been consistently good, especially Hearne; but the batsman-*plus*-bowler brigade—*i.e.* Hayward, Wainwright and Hirst, to say nothing of Mason—have really done nothing consistent with their reputations at home. To break up a long stand, as they have often done, is something; but we, who live at home in ease, and Stoddart, who commanded them (only too seldom) abroad, had hoped for something better from men whose skill had so often been proved. The composition of the side was, on paper, so excellent that the most carping critic could only suggest that it lacked a first-class left-handed batsman and a first-class slow bowler. Briggs, on his 1897 form, was the right man to choose, but his success has been comparatively small, though a few thunderstorms might have caused quite an alteration in the history of the tour, the little man having been in wonderful form during the fickle weather of last August and September. If a balance must be struck, I should summarise the matter by saying that our representatives had most of the bad luck that was flying about, but that superior bowling is the real factor in the series of disasters. Maclaren has added, if addition were possible, to his reputation; 'Ranjy,' Hearne and Richardson have well main-

tained their fame; the rest have, under unkindly fates, somewhat retrograded, so that their *locus* in English cricket this year will be regarded with especial interest. One fact as to the batsmen is notable, viz. the number of times that they have scored individually between twenty and thirty runs, at which time a man is supposed to be well set. Their defeat at this time on so many occasions is strong evidence as to the efficacy of the Australians' assault. One final word: would it be possible to arrange a match, 'Batsmen *v.* Bowlers'? If so, which side would the readers of the 'Badminton' back? It would be hard indeed to say in which team such men as Jackson, Jessop, Hirst, Wainwright, Hayward, &c. should be ranged, and harder still would be the task of the 'Bowlers'' captain. Still, I suggest that such a match is not impossible, and would be really interesting.



NOTES

BY 'RAPIER'

FACETIOUS people, who in all probability had never jumped a sheep hurdle in their lives, used to talk of visiting the Grand Military Meeting as 'going to see the soldiers roll about.' There were occasionally some indifferent performances at this gathering, no doubt, if also some displays of skilful horsemanship; but of late several notable riders have gone, poor Roddy Owen is dead, Mr. Bewicke and Mr. Atkinson have left the service, and it was therefore all the more satisfactory to find so excellent a level of capacity at the meeting last month. The feature of the sport was, of course, Mr. Reginald Ward's series of wins; for six successes in nine attempts is a wonderfully fine average. He began badly with French Furze, who fell, but went on admirably with Ulterior, Free Fight, The Tramp (twice), Romeo, and finished in the open hurdle race by squeezing old Battlemount home, much to the surprise of those who knew most about that wayward animal. I well remember Mr. Arthur Coventry maintaining that Mr. Ward had the makings of a horseman in him when the young rider was beginning, and the usual criticisms

were passed on his failure whenever he was beaten. The opinion was well justified. Experience was the one thing wanted, and constant practice at home and abroad has had its effect.

The Tenth Hussars were notably to the front after their return from Ireland; for if Mr. Reginald Ward easily made top score, the two chief races of the meeting—the Grand Military Gold Cup on County Council, and the Grand Military Handicap Steeplechase on Melton Constable—were both landed by Major Hughes-Onslow, who was second also on Walnut and Buckthorn, and would have won the Tally-Ho Steeplechase on the latter horse had it not made two dreadful mistakes. Major Hughes-Onslow had an experience of French Furze on the second day similar to that of Mr. Ward the day before—down they came. The Major bought Melton Constable to win this race, and won it comfortably by four lengths, to the consternation of those who fancied Cathal would assuredly take it as a preliminary to winning the Grand National. It is good fun to buy a horse and pay for him with something to spare at the first attempt. The Colonel of the Tenth, who used to be one of the busiest of steeplechase riders in the days when 'Bobby' was a more familiar prefix to his name than 'Colonel,' looked on with immense satisfaction at the triumph of the regiment. The other two military races were carried off by Mr. de Crespigny, one of the most promising of young riders, on Nantucket, and Mr. Murray-Thriepland, one of the hardest and keenest, on Lambay. Mr. Algernon Lawson could only manage a couple of seconds, and it is evident that an exaggerated opinion had been formed of Glendarg, who was supposed to have a chance in the Grand Military Handicap as good as that of Cathal, but ran very badly.

We constantly hear remarks about the decadence of steeplechasing and derisive comments on the old crocks who go the round and beat each other week after week, year after year. The modern handicap steeplechase horse is doubtless for the most part a poor creature; but I doubt whether steeplechasing has really ever been more flourishing than it is at present. I do not mean at the regular meetings, where the handicap 'chaser performs, but in the country generally. There is scarcely a Hunt that has not its annual fixture, point to point or otherwise; regimental

races are continually growing in numbers; the House of Commons and the Bar have their yearly 'chases; indeed, the sport is vigorously carried on in all directions, and for the most part under healthier conditions than in the enclosed parks. The good average horseman who thinks he can with luck hold his own against his own class knows that he would have a comparatively forlorn chance against the pick of professional and amateur jockeys; and, moreover, it most certainly seems to me that the state of affairs at gate-money meetings grows worse and worse. I much dislike saying this, because one continually hears such rubbish talked about roguery, and horses not trying. Almost as a rule, when foolish men are disappointed about the result of a race, they vow that trickery has been practised, and thus make one very reluctant to say anything that seems like joining in a stupid conventional cry. But suspicious things do happen. Only the other day long odds were laid on a good horse against a wretched opposition. 'This is sure to win, isn't it?' a man asked an experienced friend. 'No chance!' was the answer. 'But, my dear fellow, you know on the running last week——' the other began; to be interrupted by his friend with, 'Yes, I know it *ought* to win. I only say it *won't*. Listen to the ring!' The favourite was, as the saying runs, 'going badly in the market.' Bookmakers were offering to take less than half what they had been demanding; it looked ominous. 'All the same I don't see how he's to be beaten!' the sanguine supporter of the horse urged. 'Nor do I. But he will be!' came the reply. And he was.

I have touched on betting, a subject I rarely mention in these Notes, because I know that many of my readers are not interested in it. Others, on the contrary, are; and one wrote to me a few days ago to complain that I never discuss the odds and their takers and layers, as I sometimes did when I formerly wrote elsewhere under the signature of 'Rapier.' He used to be much entertained by these Notes, my correspondent is good enough to write, and so he is assured were others. What am I to say, now that flat racing is in progress once more? If my friend wants me to tell him how to win money by betting I cannot, for the reason, amongst others, that I have never discovered the way. I can imagine a modern Gambado discoursing on this theme, and setting off by saying, 'Bet on every race; because then you will soon come to the end of your money, and will not prolong the

agony of losing year after year.' That, I think, would be an excellent recommendation so far as it went. As for the advice that my correspondent seems to want, an experienced man might very well say, 'Follow the money. A horse is rarely made favourite for a race without good cause. You may not know what that cause is, but you may infer with tolerable safety that one exists. And do not bet any sum that you really mind losing.' An equally experienced man might very well say, 'Don't "follow the money," as it is called. There may be a more or less good cause why the horse is favourite, but it may not be nearly good enough to ensure success; indeed, if one consistently backed every favourite throughout the year, one would lose heavily. Favourites, moreover, are almost invariably at a false price, because so many people back them merely because they *are* favourites. And do not bet small sums that you can throw away without feeling. They mount up; and you lose much more than you suppose in the long run; whereas if you make it a hard and fast rule never to bet less than some appreciable amount, a sum you can't lose without a little inconvenience, you will bet seldom, and with considerable caution—never without what seems to you a good reason, bad as it may often be in reality.' These views are diametrically opposed to each other, and there is common sense in both of them.

A keen fisherman, Mr. C. J. H. Cassels, has sent me this picture and poem:

IN MEMORY OF HIS MIGHTINESS[1]

No 'Popham,' no 'Macdonald's Fancy,'
Nor e'en 'March Murderer' grim,
Had sufficient necromancy
To inveigle him.

Bright 'Red Sandy,' 'Durham Ranger,'
Popular 'Jock Scott,'
Never threatened him with danger,
Seize them he would not!

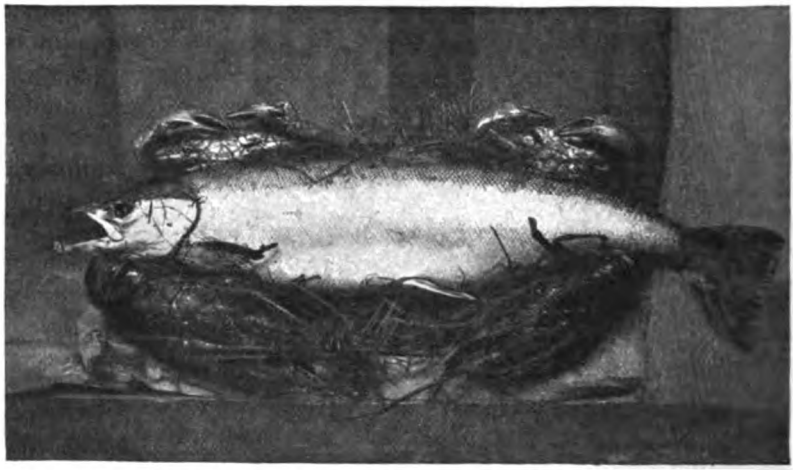
'Doctors,' 'Black,' or 'Blue,' or 'Silver,'
'Grants,' or 'Purple Kings,'
In his estimation 'nil' were—
But vain feath'ry things.

[1] Salmo salar, cock fish, weight 61¾ lb., netted in the Tay.

'Butcher,' 'Dusty Miller,' 'Greenwell,'
Often in his day
He must have, above him, seen well;
Yet he said them nay!

'Murdoch,' 'McIntyre,' 'Canary,'
Failed alike to 'grass'
This great Scottish 'salar' wary,
'Cutest of his class.

'Phantoms,' likewise 'Angels' brightest,
Spun before his nose,
He would spurn with notice slightest,
Deeming them his foes.



Whilst a hook with worms appearing
In his wat'ry lair,
Set this fish patrician sneering—
Not for him such fare!

All the flies were oft cast o'er him
Known to angler's brain;
All the baits, too, put before him,
But were tried in vain.

Oh! what rapture to have hooked him
And have played him—yet,
Cruel fate beforehand booked him
For the river net!

THE
BADMINTON MAGAZINE
May 1898

THE QUEST

BY T. F. DALE

THEY had all three proposed to her that afternoon. As it was not a hunting day, they had nothing else to do; for Farndon Manor was one of those houses where, if you do not hunt, there is no provision made for your entertainment.

'I will give you your answer at nine o'clock in the conservatory,' had been Miss Foley's answer to each of the men.

The reply caused Lord Mountharris to reflect that he would have to content himself with a shorter cigar than usual if he was to be in time; while Mr. Earnescliffe decided that he would only take three glasses of champagne, and perhaps one of port, as he was apt to get rather flushed after what he called his usual allowance; and Captain Rose realised with dismay that he had some five hours to get through somehow before he could know his fate.

At ten minutes to nine Mr. Earnescliffe, who was feeling slightly bored by the sensation of not having dined that day, met Captain Rose under the big magnolia in the further conservatory.

'What the deuce is he doing here?' was the mental reflection of each as he stole a glance at the clock to see how long a time there was in which to get rid of the undesired company. Neither, however, had moved when Miss Foley, looking very handsome in a white gown, which set off her tall, graceful figure and fine dark eyes to advantage, came along easily and joined them.

'Where is Lord Mountharris?' she said as she glanced at the two men who were awaiting her.

At that moment his lordship strolled up, congratulating himself that he had had a long cigar after all.

A feeling of embarrassment was discernible on the faces of the men, but Miss Foley was apparently quite unmoved.

'That's right,' she said calmly, as Lord Mountharris took up a position somewhat in front of the other men, 'I believe'—turning her eyes slowly from one face to the other—'you each wish to marry me.'

Now to be addressed collectively on such a subject adds to the difficulties of the moment, and as Miss Foley spoke in the manner of bold shyness which, in addition to a large income, was said to be one of her greatest charms, she certainly had the best of the situation.

The men glanced at one another rather foolishly, and Lord Mountharris, who prided himself on always being ready in an emergency, was the first to speak.

'The point is, do you wish to marry us?'

'Not all of you, certainly,' with the suspicion of a smile.

'No; but which of us, if any?' he replied, feeling suddenly as if he had embarked on a commercial speculation.

Captain Rose turned angrily on his heel and muttered, 'I don't understand this sort of pitch and toss. It's real earnest with me.'

Miss Foley caught the words.

'Yes, Captain Rose,' she said gently, 'I know you are in earnest.'

The soldier blushed furiously under the tan of his cheek, as he found he had been overheard.

'But,' she went on, with a little quiver of laughter in her voice, 'so, I believe, are the others. It is really very difficult to choose. I like you all, though in different ways. Lord Mountharris'—gazing dispassionately at the discomfited nobleman—'would make me a Viscountess, which is a pretty title, and I have money enough to keep it up.'

Lord Mountharris seemed to grow smaller suddenly.

'Mr. Earnescliffe would make me the richest woman in England, which I should enjoy; and Captain Rose—well, I have always found him a pleasant companion, and I like soldiers.'

Astonishment was now depicted on the men's faces. What was to be the result of this extraordinary meeting, and was ever anyone more entirely self-possessed than this slim damsel, who

discussed her future as if it were a matter entirely outside her own concern?

Lord Mountharris was more interested than he had ever been since he began the long chase for an heiress in which he had passed the last five years of his life; Mr. Earnescliffe, who was not quick at reading riddles, hardly knew what to make of it; and Captain Rose was fast losing his temper. Was she heartless, after all?

'Only this morning,' went on Miss Foley, 'as I was turning over the leaves of an old fairybook, I came upon the story of the princess who sent her lovers on a quest. I think I cannot do better than follow her example, though I need not ask you each to undertake a different task. Captain Rose'—as the soldier showed signs of going off—'will you please ask Sir Robert to come here? He shall be judge.'

Rose strode away, and soon returned with his host—a slight, red-faced, clean-shaven man, chiefly remarkable for his silence, his *note* on the horn, and his profound knowledge of hunting. Sir Robert Farndon, indeed, was one of those fortunate few who have attained to the height of their ambition, for he was about the best gentleman-huntsman in England, and could conceive no higher distinction. He was Master of the Wrottesmore, and had everything he could wish for in the furtherance of the great work of his life—except perhaps a better second whipper-in.

His guests, assembled in the conservatory and awaiting his advent with mingled feelings of wrath, interest, and amusement, had special claims to his respect. Mary Foley rode hard and never jumped on a hound; Mountharris was the best judge of a horse in the county; Earnescliffe subscribed 100*l.* a year to the hounds and never shut his coverts, though he had big shoots and royal princes as his guests; Rose loved hounds for themselves, and would spend any amount of time in the kennels.

As Sir Robert approached, he looked with some surprise at the little group under the big magnolia-tree.

Miss Foley was the first to speak.

'Sir Robert,' she said, in the same even, detached manner in which she had spoken all through, 'these gentlemen are kind enough to say they wish to marry me.'

Sir Robert looked mystified. 'Shouldn't mind doing it myself—in the spring,' he muttered under his breath. (N.B. Lady Emily Farndon was at the moment seated by the drawing-room fire.)

Miss Foley's lips twitched.

'Now, I cannot marry them all three, can I?'

Sir Robert shook his head.

'Well, as the great ambition of my life is to have a perfect horse, I have determined to ask each of these gentlemen to try to procure it for me, and the one who is successful'—flashing a swift glance from one face to the other—'I will marry. I will

'I SHALL REFER THE DECISION TO YOU'

give the horses a fair trial in the field; and then, if I should be in doubt, I shall refer the decision to you.'

Sir Robert shrugged his shoulders and looked curiously at the men, then, remembering himself, murmured, 'Very happy, I am sure; but——'

His doubt, however, remained unexpressed. To judge from Earnescliffe's face, he had full confidence in money getting him what he wanted; Mountharris trusted to his judgment, for no one knew better what a horse should be than he. Only Rose looked downcast; he had no money, and did not much believe in himself as a judge of horseflesh. However, he set his lips and drew in his mouth in a way that was not lost on Miss Foley.

'I say, you fellows,' said their host as they turned to the billiard-room after Miss Foley had left them with a general 'good-night,' 'you can show me the horses when you've got 'em; but if she don't marry one of you till you find one you can call perfect, I wouldn't give much for your chance, for I never saw one yet!'

Later that evening the question was discussed in the smoking-room, as only those men were present who were in the secret. The evenings at Farndon were not long, for there was always the morrow's hunting to be considered, and everyone turned in at eleven. The old butler, indeed, permitted no delays, for Sir Robert ordered breakfast with a view to the distance to the meet, and expected it to be punctual.

Bobby Rose and Sir Robert were fast though silent friends, and the latter, who understood that the soldier 'meant business about the Foley girl,' surprised that young man by uttering an emphatic 'Don't!' when the Captain expressed a determination to go out with Lord Berney's hounds on the morrow.

Rose stood still in astonishment as he was mounting the stairs to his room. The others were in advance, and Sir Robert, slowly following his friend, said meaningly, 'Take my cart and go and see Farmer Rust at Lobbs Green, and have a talk with him about his horses.'

'Thanks,' said Bobby, brightening. 'Right you are, old man —'night.'

A week later Earnescliffe came down to breakfast with a smile on his face and the light of triumph in his eyes.

'Miss Foley,' he said, as he seated himself at table, 'I've a —a—a horse I hope you will honour me by trying.'

Scarcely were the words out of his mouth, when Lord Mountharris strolled in with an air of self-satisfaction which seemed to give a peculiar zest to the choice of bacon, kidney, and mushrooms and the cup of tea with which he provided himself.

'By the way, Miss Foley,' he observed to that young woman, who was looking fresh and charming in a neatly cut habit, 'will you ride one of my horses to-day? I've just got a new one over

from Ireland that should know his business with a lady;' and a twinkle in his eyes told that *he* thought the matter was pretty well settled.

Presently Rose came in, and, slipping into a chair near Miss Foley, said in an undertone, 'I've got that horse you wanted, you know. When will you try it?'

'Well, unfortunately I am not a circus girl, and I am already promised two deep; for Mr. Earnescliffe has kindly offered me my first horse for to-day, and Lord Mountharris the second. I shall be delighted to ride yours on Friday,' adding, in a lower voice, 'Sir Robert is going to draw Bythorpe Spinney then.'

Miss Foley's horses were the wonder and admiration of the Wrottesmore Hunt that day. The chestnut mare she rode in the morning would have left nothing to be desired had not the grey that carried her in the afternoon been even better; Lord Mountharris, however, said that the mare, temperate with hounds, a lovely jumper, and most beautiful to look at, did not stand still outside the coverts, and was impatient at gates, and Earnescliffe observed that the grey was at a loss at the brook, and had evidently never seen water.

Miss Foley steadily declined to be drawn about the horses, beyond expressing much general admiration of them and their performances. She, however, confided to Lady Emily Farndon that she hardly knew how to part with either.

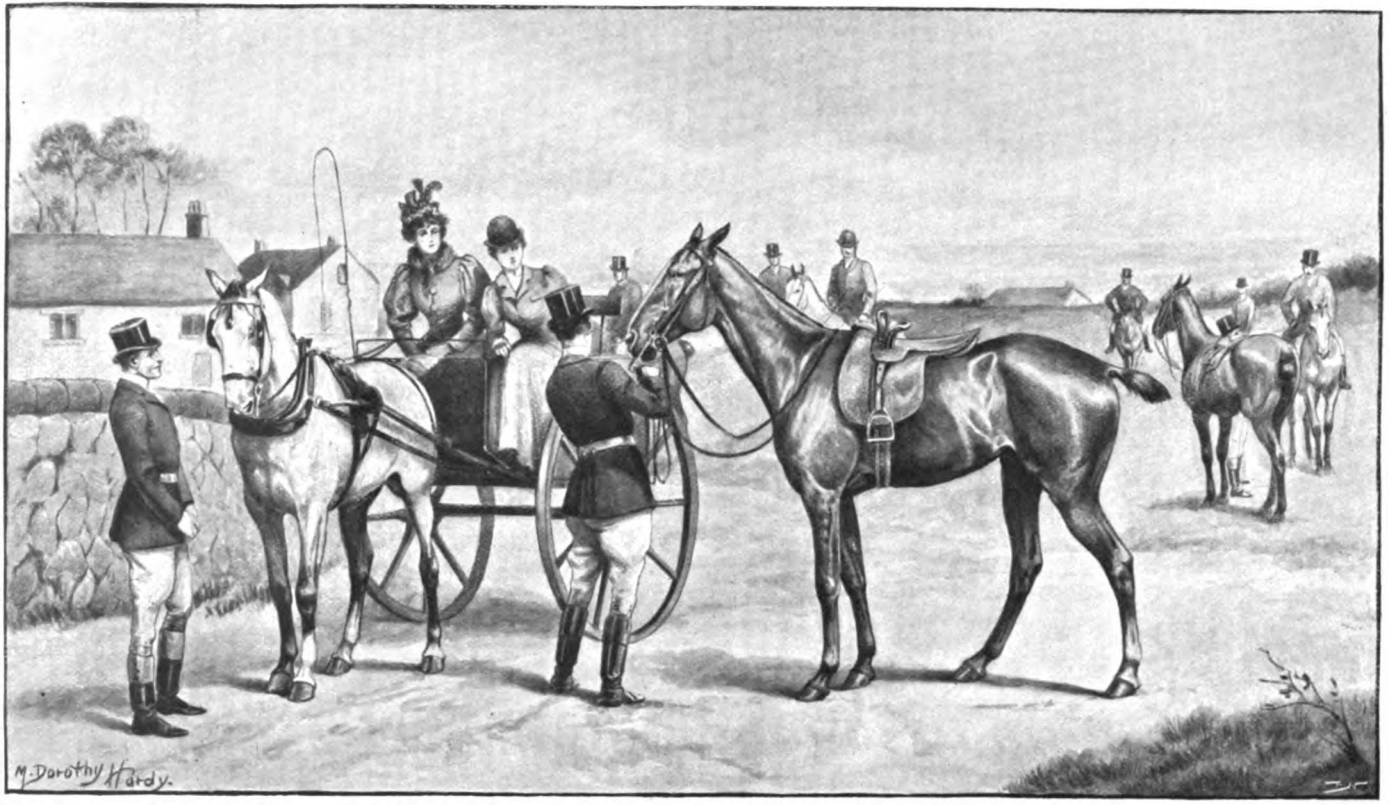
Captain Rose in the meantime said nothing more about the horse that was to carry her on the morrow, and when at the meet a groom came up to the side of Lady Emily's cart, in which Miss Foley was seated, and, with a respectful touch of his hat, said, 'The Captain said I was to bring this little mare for you, miss,' the lady's face fell.

A little, rather mean-looking brown mare with a largish head, slightly crooked forelegs, and a neck that the big head made look almost light, was the selection of Captain Rose.

'What is her name?' Miss Foley demanded sharply, as her eye took in the not too prepossessing appearance of the offered mount.

'Mrs. Gamp, miss;' and Earnescliffe and Lord Mountharris winked solemnly at one another as they observed the scene from a little distance.

'Look here, old chap,' said Mountharris as he ranged alongside the well-bred chestnut that was carrying Earnescliffe, 'there is not a pin between our two. Let's toss up, for Rose is out of it. Between you and me it's as well as it is; for I believe if he had



'THE CAPTAIN SAID I WAS TO BRING THIS LITTLE MARE FOR YOU, MISS'

given her half a chance she would have taken his.' In the meantime Miss Foley had mounted the mare and recovered the self-control which had deserted her for a moment. As the move was made to Bythorpe Spinney the unaccountable anger that had taken possession of her when she first saw Mrs. Gamp cooled down. The little mare had a lovely mouth and carried her ugly head to perfection. She moved as softly as if stepping on air, or like a perfect cycle on the best of tyres; and though she was not much to look at, Mary reflected, for all that she was a perfect hack.

'Good morning, Miss Foley. There's not a gate in the country Mrs. Gamp can't jump,' was Captain Rose's greeting as he rode past to take up a position farther along the covert-side.

It was to give Bobby a chance that Sir Robert had decided to draw Bythorpe Gorse out of its turn. A beautiful little square wood, the only covert in a sea of grass, the sole drawback to a run from Bythorpe was the formidable country that had to be ridden over on whichever side the fox might take his departure.

As Sir Robert stopped at a gate some distance from the meet, he said to the field, 'Now, gentlemen, will you please keep on the road till hounds are away? Earnescliffe, stay by this gate and don't let anyone through till you hear my horn.'

Accordingly Earnescliffe, with a face of pleased importance, took up his position with his crop on the spring of the gate.

For full five minutes Sir Robert's clear voice was the only sound that fell on the ears of the waiting field, for though taciturn at home the Master was apt to be just the least bit noisy in covert. Then came a single tongue thrown, with a curious metallic ring in it, and a thrill went through the crowd, for everyone knew it was old Charlotte, the most trusted hound in the pack. A second voice chimed in, and as the sound reached her Miss Foley's quick eye caught sight of a dark little form slipping out of the covert at the top corner. She saw, too, that there was a clear space opposite the gate guarded by Earnescliffe, so she brought Mrs. Gamp round in a flash, and the mare snorted, pricked her ears, took two easy strides, and bounded over. Almost at the same moment the chorus of the Wrottesmore bitches broke upon expectant ears, mingling with the music of hounds came the clear notes of the horn, the expressive cracks of the thongs of the whippers-in, and through the open gate the field streamed away to the first fence. It was a moderate stake and bound, with a ditch towards you, and in the middle was a hog-back stile as an alternative.

'Come, we will try that!' said Miss Foley confidentially to Mrs. Gamp as the mare strode easily under her with that perfect mechanism of stroke which wearies neither rider nor steed. Mrs. Gamp swung easily over the stile, as though it had been a sheep hurdle, and then, reaching the least bit in the world at her bit, she strove to get to hounds, which had now fallen into silence, dropping their sterns and lifting their heads as they raced on the line of the fox. The pace was good, and each hound was in the position in which she had started, for not one could gain on the others where all were doing their best.

Sir Robert was with them, and Mary was close up, leading the first division of the hard-riding field.

The next fence turned a few, and then came a stopper. Hounds ran downhill into an ugly bottom, which frowned forbiddingly before them. In one place, for which Sir Robert was making, a good man on a good horse might fly it, but to go at it with a light heart you needed to be sure not only of your mount but of your own nerve.

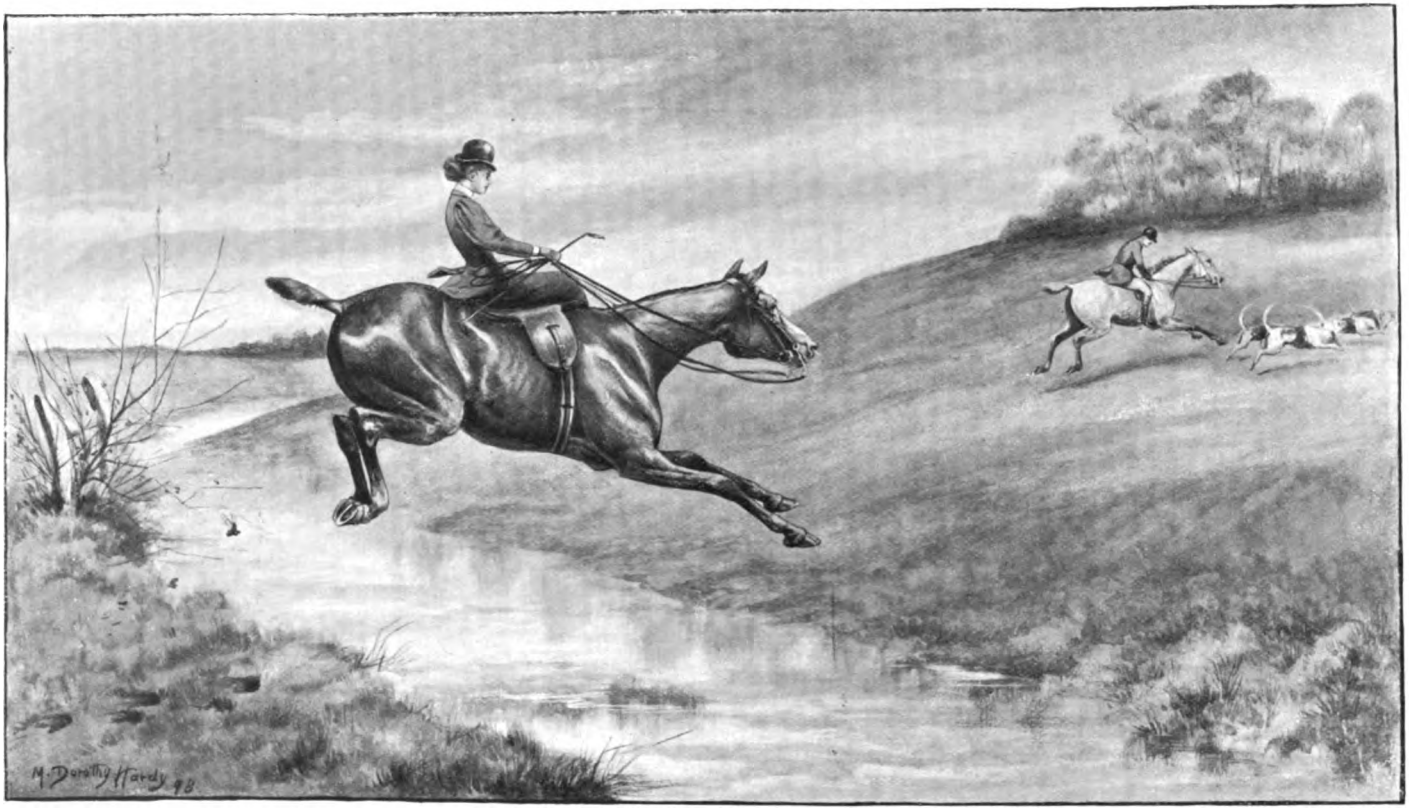
'Do it your own way!' was Miss Foley's unspoken address to the animal she was riding, and Mrs. Gamp pricked her ears as hounds threw their tongues eagerly and streamed up the opposite slope. The mare steadied to a trot as she neared the ragged bank, but without a moment's hesitation jumped lightly into the bottom and over the deep ditch which the water had cut through the soft soil, scrambled up the opposite bank like a cat, and jumped out sideways over a low timber fence.

'You're a dear,' came from the delighted rider, as they stretched away again after the hounds. Half an hour's gallop without a check, during which Mrs. Gamp jumped in and out of a road and got over two oxers, keeping hounds well in sight the whole time.

Then came a pause, but Sir Robert cast hounds quickly forward, and under the hedgerow they took up the line and streamed away with more music but less pace than before. The fox, too, had had enough, and in another ten minutes Mary caught a glimpse of him straining up the slope to Heronwood Forest, on the far side of Ashendon Brook.

'Now let me see what you can do over water!' and Mrs. Gamp was sent at the brook, which was fifteen feet wide and quite full to within a foot or so of the top of its rotten crumbling banks.

Sir Robert, who was in front, landed, rolled over, picked up his tough little body, and was on his horse and with hounds again in a trice. Mrs. Gamp was in no way disturbed by the accident, but strode over with just the least perceptible quickening



'NOW LET ME SEE WHAT YOU CAN DO OVER WATER'

of her stride, and was away like a steeplechaser as soon as her feet touched the opposite bank.

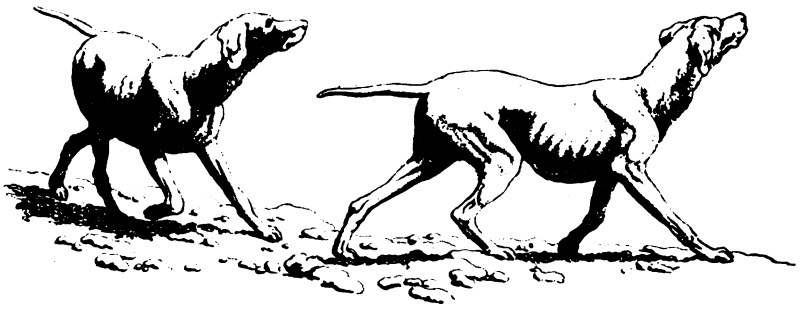
And now began an exciting race. Hounds and fox were in the same field, and the end was near. Sir Robert was riding as silent as death, heedful not to distract his hounds or get their heads up. Swiftly they drew near the boundary fence into the big coverts towards which the fox was making a last gallant bid for life. The fence had once been an oxer, but the old oak rail had long since disappeared and had been replaced with the modern wire. Now, thanks to the golden arguments and friendly smiles of the Master, the wire had gone, but the posts still remained.

It was, even as it stood, a big fence after such a fifty minutes; but Mary by this time had such confidence in the mare, she would almost have ridden at a house. She had no thought of turning. Mrs. Gamp took off as gallantly as ever . . . a second of chaotic upheaval and Mary was rolling over and over into the field. Unhurt, she was up in a moment, and so was Mrs. Gamp, but the poor little mare scrambled up on three legs and stood beside the post that had wrought the mischief, with her off foreleg shattered and helpless.

. . . . . .

'You see,' said Mary half tearfully, later, to Mrs. Gamp's owner, 'as I killed her, I had to choose you,' with which reason Captain Rose did not seem inclined to quarrel.

'The best I ever saw,' was the verdict given by Sir Robert. 'She'—and it is to be supposed he referred to the rider at this point—'she may get other husbands, but she will never have such another horse.'



MUSTERING 'SCRUBBERS' IN QUEENSLAND

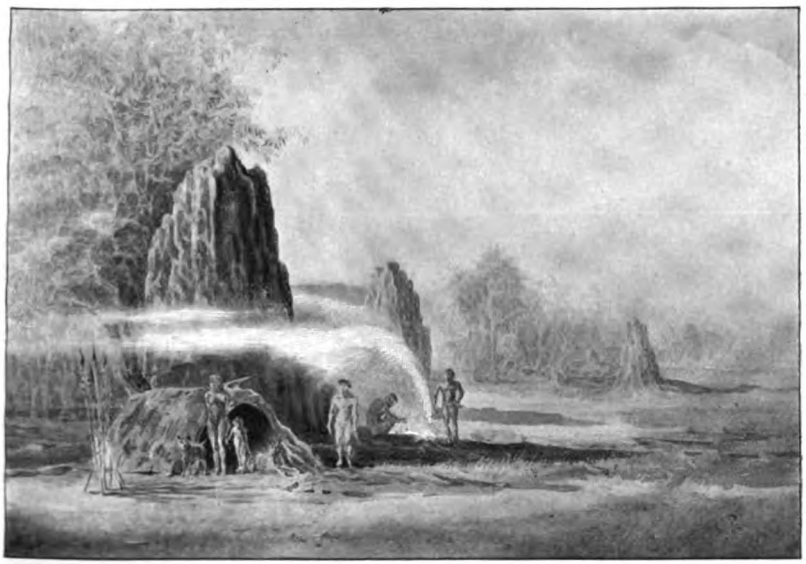
BY HUGH L. HEBER-PERCY

It was the middle of an Australian winter, cold enough at night to warrant the use of two or three blankets, and hot enough during the day to entice one to strap one's coat on the pommel and to roll up one's shirt sleeves. Eight of us—including Lumsden, the owner of a cattle station in the wide bay district, Wason, the head stockman, and I—had ridden to the out-station, for the cattle muster.

We wanted to collect a mob of fat cattle for a town some fifty miles off, to brand the calves, &c., and to get what 'scrubbers' (wild cattle) we could out of the ranges which divided our head-quarters from neighbouring stations. I think we all looked forward to this last part of the programme as the most exciting of our station work. We reached our destination about sundown, and were welcomed by McConichie, the stockman there, his wife, stockboy, and two blacks.

After letting our horses go in the paddock we sat down to supper in three divisions, and the usual stockman's conversation seemed the most interesting to the greater number. McConichie told us of the gallop he and his stockboy had had after a mob of wild devils of horses, how they had succeeded in yarding them, how the leader of the mob, as soon as he had found that he was trapped, had jumped a six-foot fence out again, and how a mare in trying to follow him had broken her neck. He told us too of having been up in the ranges, and of seeing a certain red bull with his mob, who had got away from us when we were last there; also of having seen the brindle cock-horned 'stag,' who, when charging one of our hands, had got his horn between the man's leg and his saddle, and had tossed him clean over his head.

After a smoke we turned in, but I had my doubts of rest, for fleas were abundant. At first I lay awake, kept so by the hum of a mosquito, who seemed unable to make up his mind where to settle. Then I listened to the ceaseless working of the white ants, who were busy eating out the heart of the wooden upright in the wall near my head. These insects are the plague of the country, they will eat the inside out of almost anything, leaving the most perfect veneering outside to conceal their depredations. When up in the Northern Territory of South Australia, a bank manager at Port Darwin showed me his strong-room, which was cemented round, but had a wooden floor. There was a table in



the centre. The white ants had eaten through the flooring-boards, had worked their way up the inside of a leg of the table, continued on through the table top to some big bank ledgers, and these when moved were found to be absolutely hollow. Good business for the man with an overdrawn account! He also showed me some sheets of lead a quarter of an inch thick completely perforated by these insects. I have seen their nests in the bush built up to the height of eighteen feet. Finding sleep was impossible, I got some other clothes and my own blankets, walked out into the paddock, lay down on the grass and had a good night's rest.

We were all astir at daybreak, saddled up before breakfast,

and then, after fixing up the pack-horses and watching Toby, one of the black boys (who had the peculiarity of invariably having a fit before riding a buckjumper), sit a bad-tempered brute very cleverly, we started.

I could never quite understand the reason for this boy having a fit at these times. It could not have been through fear, for he was a good rough rider, and would get on anything; I suppose it must have been caused by excitement. He used to go behind a gate, or to any place where he was partly concealed, lie down, and

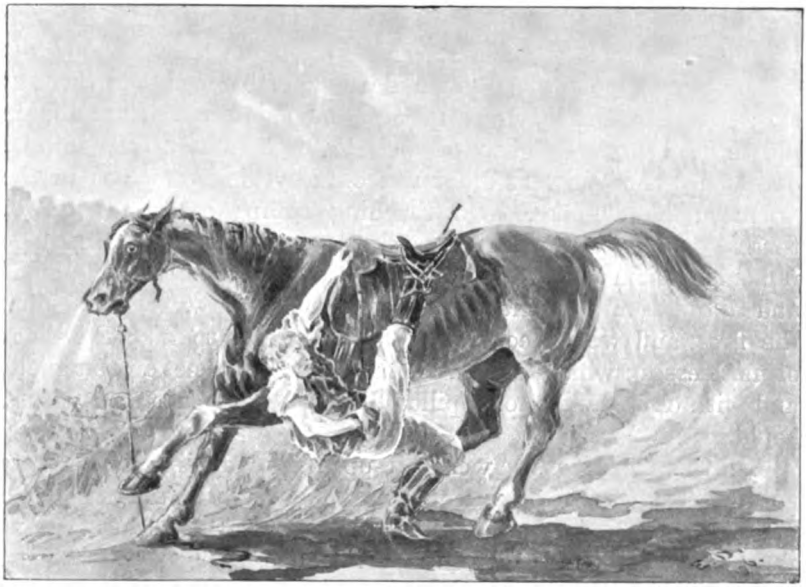
A BAD-TEMPERED BRUTE

proceed to go through his customary contortions, get up, and then ride his horse.

I remember Lumsden was riding Corvette, a very handsome black mare; Wason rode Willy, one of the grandest horses possible for the ranges or on a camp; I was on Boomerang, a roan by Old Messenger, imported, said to be so good that no one could catch his former owner when on him or his brother Plover after wild cattle or horses. After riding through open forest country for ten or twelve miles we came to the foot of the first range, up which we were obliged to lead our horses.

On reaching the top, four of us took a round to the right to see what we could in the way of cattle and tracks, and sent the rest on to the camp.

We had already rounded up several mobs of cattle, and left them standing quiet. When on the steep sidling of a big hill, away went Wason and McConichie in pursuit of some others that were making off for a scrub, Lumsden and I following. We had a roughish gallop before we turned and steadied them. When we pulled up, to my surprise Lumsden was missing, and alarmed lest he should have come to grief, I rode back, and shortly met him. He told me that his snaffle bit had broken in two in



HIS FOOT AND SPUR CAUGHT IN HIS STOCK-WHIP

the horse's mouth (we always rode with a single-reined bridle), and on trying to spring clear of his horse, who was galloping through thick timber and on the side of a very steep stony ridge, his foot and spur had caught in his stock-whip, which was coiled up and hanging strapped to the off side of his cantle. By good luck he kept hold of the pommel, and mercifully the mare stopped; but, owing to his hanging position, he had great difficulty in getting his knife out of his breeches pocket to cut the spur strap, which was his only chance. This he eventually managed to do. Hanging by one arm and one leg to an unbridled horse

galloping through timber was an experience few men can have gone through and lived to tell the tale. Had he been riding another favourite horse of his he would certainly have been kicked to pieces.

After this we proceeded without seeing any more cattle. Crossing the watershed, we were struck by the beautiful effects of light and shade on the hills, and the magnificent colouring of the sky. The dark and luxuriant foliage of the scrubs, lit up here and there where caught by the rays of the sun, then sinking like a globe of fire, showed up strongly against the lighter coloured and sparsely leaved forest trees. The fleecy clouds, seemingly regretful that the light of another day was passing away, had stolen colours, less blinding, but more beautiful, than the sun itself could show. And as the sun sank from view beyond the distant range, we saw the green flash, so often visible to those at sea; then as we rode, star after star came out from their hiding places, and hung—globes of electric light - out of the infinite depths beyond—so very different from anything one sees in the northern hemisphere. On reaching camp we found two or three good log fires blazing, and plenty of wood collected to replenish them during the night. Our horses were hobbled and allowed to join the others, the quart pots were put against the fires, and we collected small leafy boughs to take the place of mattresses; which, covered with waterproof sheet and blankets, and with one's saddle for a pillow, formed as good a bed as one could want.

In the morning we were all up before daylight, and soon got under way. Everyone was cautioned not to speak above a whisper, and all jingling of pots, horse bells, and hobble chains stopped. We divided into two parties, one lot, being those most to be relied on and the best mounted, went away to the left, where we expected to come across the troublesome cattle. The other lot took the packhorses, and any cattle they could find, on to a certain standing camp, where we were to join them preparatory to driving all the cattle we might have collected down to the main camp. Our party had the wind right, and were getting higher and higher amongst the ranges, noticing tracks, and keeping a bright look-out all round.

Suddenly Andrew—a black boy—who was in front, stopped, pointing up to the top of the hill above us on our left. I could see nothing. He had, however, spotted a beast's horns above the trunk of a fallen tree. We held a brief consultation, decided to get back, and go round down wind of the cattle, to try to cut

them off from a certain scrub. So turning again we retraced our steps, and climbed the hill, leading our horses up the steepest places, so as not to have them blown when we reached the top. Unluckily we got amongst the rocks and loose stones, some of which rolling down must have startled the cattle, for before we could reach the crest we could hear them going. Away we went, and saw them galloping along the sidling to our left front. I knew there was a main ridge, running down a long

FAIRLY LAID HIMSELF OUT TO OUTPACE ME

way, and rather in the direction we wished them to go. The main scrub was to the left, and a tongue of this came down not very far to the left of where the ridge ended. As I galloped I saw one beast—a cow I think—and then another, start up the hill, leaving the tail of the mob. Seeing that the others had not noticed them breaking off, I thought there was a chance of keeping the rest right if I could only get up to the leaders quickly enough to guide them on to the main ridge. Putting in my

spurs, I sent my roan along as hard as he could crack, cut off the few who had broken away, and got alongside the last of the mob.

The leaders then also began to incline to the left, headed by a roan bullock, who, seeing that I was trying to catch him up, and wanting to keep on in the same direction as he was then going, fairly laid himself out in his effort to outpace me. It was touch and go whether I reached him in time to edge him off on to the main ridge, which we were very quickly approaching. Had he passed that, they would have been heading down a decline straight for the tongue of scrub, and it would have been a thousand to one against our being able to turn them up the hill again to the right to avoid it. I had to trust to the other hands to back me up, and keep the tail straight. For a second or two I thought he would beat me, but I managed by good luck to race up in time to land a sharp cut with my whip on his nose; this made him throw his head up, and to the off side; his body followed his head, and with another cut he was on to the ridge. With one more effort I was alongside of him, and was then able to steady my horse a bit, getting his head up to the bullock's shoulder or neck. He was going much too fast to stop and turn behind me, or horn my horse, and I had my whip ready to prevent him from trying to pass in front of me.

Being now his master for a few seconds, I glanced over my shoulder to see what the others were doing behind me, and caught a glimpse of a sight I shall never forget. Twenty head of cattle were racing down, about the first six in single file, and on the left of each of these was a horseman, keeping his beast straight after the leader. The rest were more together. It was glorious! I know of no sport more exciting. No; even a good run with fox-hounds hardly gives so great a joy.

> I have lived, I have loved, I have ridden
> To hounds, at a boar, to a steer,

and I scarcely know which sport yields the keenest enjoyment. Given a good horse, that you can trust, who knows his business, and is game enough to play it, extending himself over broken ground, down a range, where a blunder is a crime, and I can imagine no form of sport more thrilling and delightful! More—there is the added feeling that it is business, good honest work, that it is necessary and must be done, and not merely an excitement and an amusement.

We galloped on till we reached the bottom, when unfor-

tunately my horse went dead lame, and I had to stop. My place was, however, at once filled from behind, the cattle crossed the gully, galloped over the next ridge, were pushed past the tongue of scrub, and, as luck had it, ran right up to another lot which the hands with the packhorses had collected, and were then steadied.

We rested our horses—mine had picked up a stone, the removal of which, however, put him all right again—and then went away to the right of the direction the packhorses had taken, riding back for a while along their tracks to get the wind right. This we did, and were toiling up a steep range when Lumsden pointed out what he called a 'tree-kangaroo.' It certainly was in a tree. It was not a kangaroo, however, but a wallaby, a smaller animal of the same species. The tree was a fairly large one, and leaning. This tree-wallaby is the only one I have ever seen, though I have spent many years in the Australian bush.

We were just getting to the top of the range when a mob of about thirty cattle, running from the other direction, probably started by frightened kangaroos, almost ran up to us. On seeing us they spun round, and went away down the other side pell-mell, we after them. There was a scrub some distance beyond on their right, so I kept to that side. We did rip down properly, not propping but galloping! It was so steep I could see down over my horse's head in front of him, my saddle mainly kept in its proper place by the crupper. But I knew all my gear was good and strong, for having broken several trees before in the ranges, I had had that one plated all over, and a double crupper staple put in besides. Sometimes I was almost dragged off my horse by the whip-sticks, through which we crashed like a clown through a paper hoop, over rocks and logs, scattering stones in all directions in our headlong course. That a horse can keep his feet over such ground is really wonderful. I saw one beast go head over heels amongst the rocks in front of me to my left, and on getting up he attempted to charge as I passed; but it was no go, for I was beyond him like a flash, and left him behind to go his own way unmolested. It was impossible, and would have been utterly useless, to try to stop.

At the bottom there was a gully, deep and ragged-edged it looked as I came down to it. The cattle crossed by some pads. For a second I thought we must be in, but the pace was too good for any hesitation, and the roan flew it in his stride.

Then we got into long grass on a small flat, and I trusted no hidden logs might be in our way, for my horse's one fault was

that he never seemed to recognise their position as some horses do, seemingly by instinct, and had given me several falls over them. McConichie then foolishly tried to round up the cattle at once, much too soon. If we had let them run on a bit further and steadied them gradually we might possibly have got them. As it was, however, directly he tried to swing them round, they broke and charged in all directions. Andrew and I (he was riding a good mare named Dewdrop, afterwards cut and crippled by a boar when pigsticking) got in front of eight bullocks, led by our old cock-horned friend, and tried to steady them by galloping in front and speaking to them; but it was no good. When we got too near they charged us; if we turned round they would not charge after us, but went straight on. I tried the whip on their noses, but that seemed to make them the more determined, and my lash catching on a bough, I had to gallop on without it.

They crossed the small creek or gully we were galloping up and started to climb the range. We got to the top first, jumped off our horses, and threw bits of rock and stones at them as they came towards us. Andrew made particularly good practice, catching the brindle 'stag' one on his head that must have made him see stars. They did not care a snap, however, but came straight up, so that we had to make tracks to get out of their way, which Andrew only managed to do by the skin of his teeth; then, gaining the crest, away they went thundering down the other side. We concluded it was useless to follow them, and gave it up. Having regained my whip, we rode back and found all the others except one bathing their horses in the creek, the whole being pretty well cooked. Teddy Baldry, the absent one, joined us shortly after, saying he had tried to steady four head for some distance, but had failed.

Starting again, after a while we came on some very fresh tracks of running cattle; these we followed for about three miles, till they brought us to a strip running up to the main scrub. As we neared this we saw the last beast, a calf, just entering it at the bottom. Some of us galloped to the right and some to the left of the scrub, keeping wide to avoid being heard or seen. We then jumped off our horses, hung them up, and, having left hands to attend to them and take them down, ran in across to try to turn the cattle back again, should we have been lucky enough to be in front of the leaders. (It is quite impossible to ride in these vine scrubs.) Not a sound could I hear: even the calves had been taught to hold their tongues. I got into what seemed to be a main cattle pad and waited, with my revolver in my hand, but

heard nothing, and came to the conclusion the cattle had bested us, and had run up before we got there.

I waited, however, a bit longer listening, and then determined to walk down along the pad. A stick snapped, but I thought it was away above me, and again made up my mind that they had passed. Listening intently, all I could hear was a swarm of locusts making their peculiar whirring noise, exactly like a wire manufactory I once went over near Tintern. Again I thought I heard the click of a beast's hoof. Surely that was below me? I turned, and there stood a beast in front of me not ten paces off. He was, if anything, more surprised than I, and as he hesitated for a moment I thought he meant mischief; but turning quickly to one side, crash he went into the thick of the vine scrub, trying to get round and past me. I ran as hard as I could and shouted to try to turn him, and as I was able to get through the hanging vines pretty well as fast as he could, I kept above him. To help him to make up his mind to do right, I fired at him. I heard Lumsden fire too, away on my right. Then down I went on my face, having caught my foot in a vine.

The whereabouts of the mob was now easily told by the noise they made, as, having turned back from the shouts and shots, they rushed down for the open forest. Picking up myself and my revolver I ran after them so as to force them right out of the scrub. As I neared the edge I saw some cattle and horsemen gallop away over the open. My horse was being held a little above, and jumping on to him I was just in time to see the tail of the mob, evidently a large one, leave the scrub, and I rode on their left to keep them straight after the others, another hand bringing up the rear.

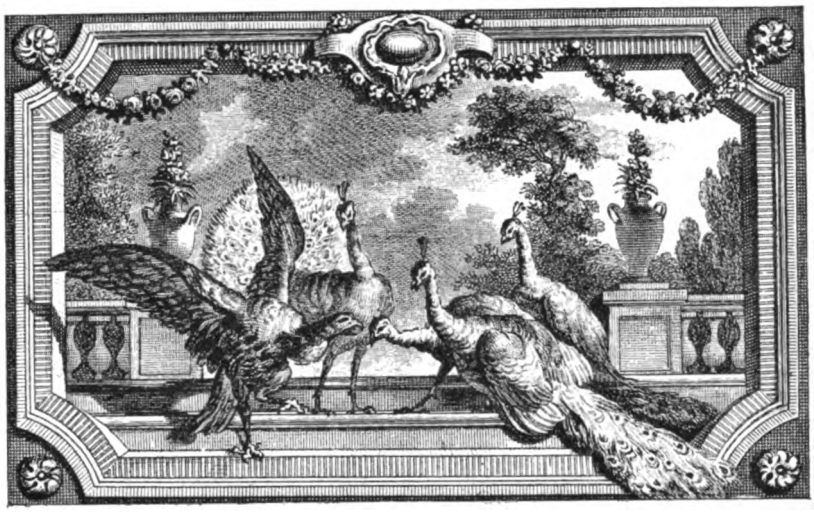
We raced them down over the creek on to fairly level ground —humouring them a bit gradually steadied them—and then swung the leaders round into the body of the mob. These darted out several times, but were headed back, and we soon got them to stand. After giving them time to calm down and regain their breath we started them for the standing camp, two men in front and the others at intervals all round. This is always a most ticklish time. The great red bull was amongst them, and I saw that he meant going. Once, twice, and again he was headed back into the herd; but he knew the game too well, and at last making up his mind he made a bolt for freedom, and we had a real good race. I got up to him, but he would not turn, so I dropped my whip on him for a bit, just as a reminder that he

was not altogether boss; and there being no cracker on my green hide fall, each stroke cut him like a knife.

He had, however, made up his mind to regain the scrub and would not yield to any gentle persuasion, so I got my revolver out and let him have one in the ribs. I thought I had missed, but, getting on his other side, saw the bullet projecting under his hide, gave him another, and again crossed him, and saw blood trickling down from the first shot, and the second bullet stayed by his skin. Firing again, I carelessly got rather too much ahead. He seized his opportunity and, maddened by pain, swung round and charged.

The positions of pursuer and pursued were reversed. He meant to revenge himself if possible, and very nearly succeeded in doing so, his change of front was so sudden and determined. It was only thanks to the horse recognising his danger and putting on a spurt that we were saved. Wheeling round, I hoped he would follow, but he was up to any such simple trick as that, and galloped on. We were both going best pace when he suddenly blundered straight into the upturned roots of a fallen tree, my horse jumping alongside of him. The bull lay there done and, I expect, rather sick. Knowing that it was hopeless to try to get him, that he would probably die, and that in any case he must not get away, I came close to him and put a bullet into his head. That night the dingoes sang the requiem of the red bull of the ranges.

Rather sadly I rode back and rejoined the others. On reaching the standing camp we had dinner, and being too late to reach the main camp, we drove the cattle on till dark, and then watched them all night, riding the packhorses. They gave us much trouble, breaking away during the night. For my part I considered that galloping about in that country by the light of a half moon was no great catch, especially when riding chance horses. My watch was during the first part of the night, and I was not sorry to turn in after eighteen hours in the saddle. A real day's work!



UNIVERSITY CRICKET MATCHES

BY THE HON. R. H. LYTTELTON

THERE is a sense of continuity and of permanence about the University match that is soothing in these days of change. Headmasters have power to knock a public school match on the head, the borderland between gentlemen and players is becoming very narrow, counties may come and go, but the University match, it is safe to predict, will go on, humanly speaking, for ever. Bishops, Anglican and Roman, judges—unfortunately for them, no prime ministers—scholars and clergy without number have played in these matches. Though just at present the bowling is often weak, still somehow the game is never drawn, and more than in any other match does the nervousness of the combatants upset the calculations of judges and bettors of trifling sums, made for the sentiment of the thing, to show which side has your sympathy. He is an evil creature who, if he bets at all, bets against his own University. The University match, like the Irish Secretaryship, has been the grave of many a reputation. John Walker made 19 runs in six innings; Lord Cobham made 61 in seven innings; A. W. Ridley exactly the runs in exactly the same number of innings; R. D. Walker

84 runs in ten innings. All these were men who played for the Gentlemen while they were at the University, and were all excellent batsmen.

The first match took place in 1827, and was unfinished, but Oxford would certainly have won; and the teams met intermittently till 1838. Since then the match has been an annual fixture, and has been played out to a finish every year except 1827, 1844, and 1888, when, though four days were given to it, the weather rendered a finish impossible. The University match makes the great opportunity for old friends to meet, and though, as in every other walk of life, the crowds are a nuisance and a hindrance to the enthusiast's real enjoyment, still Lord's is, after all, the real ground to enjoy cricket on, and long may it be played there, urgently desirable as it is that the M.C.C. should abolish carriages, and let us walk round the place in peace.

It must appear odd to the University player of to-day, to whom the University match is *the* match of his lifetime, to be told that in 1869 no less a man than the late Attorney-General, Sir R. T. Reid, was absent during the second innings of Oxford, as also was the present Bishop of Liverpool; whilst in the following year Oxford began and finished the match with only ten men. The late Lord Dudley was absent one innings in 1841, and one from each side failed to appear in the second innings in 1850. These facts justify us in concluding that the match was conducted far less systematically in those days. If a man found it inconvenient he very likely declined to play, and others threw their captain over in a way that the modern Zingaro and Quidnunc has been known to do; there is good reason to believe that this was the case at least as late as 1850. Since then things have altered; but though we are all proud of the history of the old University matches, there is little doubt that many of the earlier elevens, like those in the Eton and Harrow matches, were more or less scratch teams.

The rules which qualify a man to play for his University are somewhat elastic, and, I think, need revision. No man is allowed to play for more than four years. This has been the unwritten rule since 1865, when R. D. Walker had grown grey in the service for Oxford, and played his fifth year. But within this four years' limit there is an elasticity that is as surprising as it is absurd. As far as I know, if a man resides one term, or even one day, at any college, and keeps his name on the books but never sees his University except for that one term or day, he has,

nevertheless, qualified himself to play for four years. Though this preposterous rule is not acted up to now, it frequently happens that a man plays who has not been in residence that term at all; and the rule, I contend, should be altered on account of the injustice that is done to the *bona-fide* residents who long to gain the coveted honour of playing for their University. There is another way in which Cambridge is at a disadvantage—namely, that their honour men get their degrees at the end of the third year; if they leave the University for business purposes they are lost. The Oxford honour men take their degrees a year later. A rational man from each University would soon settle the question quite fairly for both sides if they were to meet and discuss it.

The late venerable Bishop of St. Andrews, who only died a few years ago, played in the first University match in 1827, and clean bowled seven Cambridge wickets; and on the Cambridge side is to be seen the name of W. G. Cookesley, most famous of scholars, and a very well-known Eton master. Two men played five times in this match, the famous C. D. Marsham and R. D. Walker, both for Oxford. C. D. Marsham was perhaps the best bowler that ever played for either side; as straight and as accurate as a professional, he was the sheet anchor of both Oxford and the amateurs in his day. His side won four of the five matches in which he took part, the famous game he lost being that which the renowned J. Makinson won for Cambridge almost by himself. C. D. Marsham took forty Cambridge wickets, or an average of four an innings, at an average cost of nine runs a wicket. Of all the players who played four years very few have won on every occasion. I think I am correct in saying that S. C. Voules is the only Oxonian, and T. A. Anson, W. de St. Croix, and W. Mills the only three Cantabs; and of these Voules's is the most remarkable feat, as he played so late as 1863, '64, '65, and '66.

A couple of very famous Cambridge players in the persons of Woods and McGregor would very likely have been added to this list, as they had some way the best of the drawn match played in their first year 1888. But the comparatively few men who have played in four winning elevens shows that in the long run the matches have been very even, and there is every reason to suppose that this will always be the case. Both Universities have grand grounds—almost too good perhaps: they show up the weakness in bowling. Both get the leading public schools, though certain of these seem to favour one or the other; Oxford secures the majority of Eton and nearly monopolises Winchester, while Cambridge gets most Uppingham boys and Marlborough. In the last twenty

years Cambridge has had rather the best of it, though since 1891 victory has gone in alternate years between them. But since 1878 Cambridge has had a fine lot of cricketers—A. P Lucas, E. Lyttelton, A. Lyttelton, A. G. Steel, Bligh, C. T. Studd, G. B. Studd, Wright, Bainbridge, Woods, McGregor, Streatfield, Jackson, and several others—and Oxford has not been quite so strong. In C. D. Marsham's days in the fifties, however, and Mitchell's days in the sixties, Oxford had the better of the argument; and Cambridge largely owes her numerical superiority to the five consecutive wins in 1839, '40, '41, '42, and '43.

It might be thought that, in a purely amateur match such as this, where bowling is generally weak, there would have been more individual innings of a hundred made than in Gentlemen and Players at Lord's. But up to date twenty hundreds have been scored in the University matches, and twenty-two in the other. Seven hundreds were made in Gentlemen and Players up to 1869, but not till 1870 did W. Yardley set all the cricket world talking of the first hundred of the University match. It is the old story of nerve; for so many men in this the great match cannot play up to their true form. Since 1870, however, in Gentlemen and Players there have been sixteen 'centuries' played against twenty in the other, and W. G. Grace has scored six of them. As Yardley was the first, so up to the present he holds the proud position of being the only man who on two separate occasions has made a hundred; and of all the grand innings played by anybody in these matches, the hundred made by Yardley in 1870 perhaps takes the first place. The match looked hopelessly bad for Cambridge, who were only twelve runs on and had lost five wickets; and Lord's was not by any means the easy ground it is now, as Cambridge found out to their cost the following year. But in a short time Yardley had pulverised the bowling, before you knew where you were the bowlers in his hands had become helpless; fortunately, too, Jack Dale, the other end, was all the time playing a most scientific game, and a good total was reached. But out of 198 runs made from the bat Yardley and Dale scored 167.

The next year, 1871, there was an old-fashioned wicket at Lord's, not a dangerous one, but of a kind I should like to see in these days, when the ball shot and came down the hill; and the finest fast bowling ever seen in this match was that of Sam Butler for Oxford. He bowled from the pavilion end all the innings, and in 97 balls he got all ten wickets for 38 runs, all but two having been clean bowled; and some of the Cam-

bridge eleven could really bat. Yardley, Money, Thornton, and A. T. Scott were all good, three of them up to Gentlemen and Players form; but the pace of the ball, its break and its shoot, wanted Grace to master it, and Grace only would have played the bowling that day. Butler got five wickets, four clean bowled, the second innings, and so for the whole match had the astounding figures of fifteen wickets for 95 runs, a feat not to be seen again, by this generation at all events. Cambridge had their turn the year after in a match which shows the odd vicissitudes of the game. Oxford had the dreaded Sam Butler to bowl again, as well as his most efficient coadjutor, C. K. Francis, who now presides over the police-court in South-West London. They had besides Townshend, Law, Ottaway (than whom no player that ever lived had a stronger defence), Hadow, Tylecote, Harris, altogether eight old choices to the five of Cambridge; and yet Cambridge, on winning the toss, amassed 388 runs, a score that was not equalled until Cambridge, in 1892, made exactly the same total. The wicket was easier than it had been the former year; at any rate, Sam Butler could only get three wickets at a cost of 103 runs. Oxford had to bat at five o'clock after many hours' fielding, and the boot was soon seen to be on the other leg, for in 68 balls W. N. Powys secured six Oxford wickets, five of them clean bowled. Next morning, on a wicket rather damaged by rain, Powys took seven more wickets, securing in the whole match, against a strong batting eleven, thirteen wickets at rather over three runs each! These two great fast bowling performances took place in two consecutive years, and stand as, on the whole, the two finest records of their description. In this same match of 1872 Yardley scored his second hundred, but the real credit of Cambridge's long innings may justly be put down to the then young Etonians, Longman and Tabor, who for the first time in these matches put up a hundred before the wicket fell.

As showing how completely calculations may be upset in cricket we can turn to 1884 and 1885. In the former year Oxford played no fewer than seven freshmen, and won the match easily by seven wickets. The following year they had eight old choices, and won the toss; but Cambridge won the match by seven wickets. The public, as a rule, prefer the side that plays the most old choices, but they must have had a rude awakening in 1885. So frequently does nervousness show itself in this match that a side is fortunate if it has players who have gained experience in playing for a first-class county. Such was the case with the famous K. J. Key in 1884, for he had won

his spurs in playing in a well-remembered match at the Oval against Lancashire in the previous year.

If a young player has faced such an ordeal he will be better prepared to overcome his nervousness at the University match. I seldom indulge in prophecy, but I anticipate that Cambridge will find Oxford a far stronger side in 1898 than they were in 1897. In 1897 Oxford had some excellent batsmen in Fane, Bromley-Martin, Champain, and Eccles, but none of them had taken part in this great match before, and only Fane had been seen in first-class cricket elsewhere. The result was that they played nervously in the match; but with a year's experience of first-class cricket at Oxford and elsewhere, these batsmen, if they all play again, will probably appear in a very different light. In the Cambridge eleven, Burnup, Wilson, Druce, Jessop, Shine, and Bray had all played, not only for their University in previous years, but also in first-class county matches, having obtained thereby an experience far beyond that gained by Oxford.

The great R. A. H. Mitchell was captain in 1863, 1864, and 1865, and won all three matches, having himself played in 1864 one of those monumental innings that live for ever. This was in the days of low scoring. Cambridge had only two bowlers, and Oxford had a very strong batting side, Mitchell himself, Cane, Tritton, F. R. Evans, Frederick, R. D. Walker, Voules, Wright, and Maitland, altogether making one of the strongest batting sides that either University has ever turned out, and they only wanted 125 runs to win; but if it had not been for a splendid not-out innings of 55 scored by Mitchell himself, Cambridge would have won. This innings is fondly spoken of by all Oxonians, and we have lately been reminded by Professor Cane how nearly F. G. Pelham bowled him out for almost nothing.

We all grow old, but a great delight of cricket is that as long as you live and can see, the joys of looking on at the game never decline; and of all matches the University match, to a University man, is the most enjoyable. You are very keen for your side to win, the cricket is very good, and the players are, or ought to be, about in their prime. Luckily, also, the weakness of the bowling is counterbalanced to a great extent by the nervousness of the batsmen. Anyhow, the matches are played to a finish, and your pleasure is not spoilt by a series of drawn games, as so often happens nowadays even in county contests.

THE MAJOR'S TROUT

BY E. M. MOTT

OUR fishing club at Arnley was very select. The rules were severe and stringently kept. I, being the secretary, enforced them officially. As a matter of fact, I was merely the Major's puppet. He ordered us all about, myself included; and we submitted very cheerfully, for he was a genial tyrant and a first-class fisherman.

Arnley is an Arcadian little village in the heart of the West Riding. Grey tiers of limestone rock frown above the little brown Swarfe, that swirls through velvet pastures never scarred by a plough for three centuries back. It is a bonny little river that needs good tackle and good judgment, for the current is swift and the trout are sly; many a happy hour have I spent there, and many a dismal one. But these latter the fisherman very rightly forgets.

There was one person whom the Major indulged, I had almost said obeyed. This was his pet niece, Miss Christina Royce—'Chris' to a privileged few. Like *Punch's* Miss Diana, she was 'particular, you know, but jolly.' At the time I write of, she was about sixteen, and had not even put her hair up. Ah, Chris! you wear Paris bonnets now; but I remember how delightful you looked in a red Tam-o'-Shanter stuck all over with trout-flies. For Chris was a fisherwoman of no mean skill and of boundless ardour.

If Chris was her uncle's idol, yet she knew he gave her but a divided devotion. Her rival in his allegiance was the big trout.

Every fishing club has a big trout. And he would be but a poor creature who did not maintain that his own particular big trout was superior to all others. Any one of us would have fought to the death for the honour of the Arnley big trout, down to little Tommy Royce, the Major's son. He was thirteen then, the youngest member of the A.F.C., and knew as much about fishing as the oldest. Otherwise he was an ordinary boy—at least, I thought so until--but I anticipate.

The best bit of the club water was a stretch nearly a mile long not far from 'The Lodge,' the Major's house. It was crossed at one point by a stone bridge. At the corner of the bridge, in a pool snugly sheltered by a steep bank, and by the stonework of the nearest arch, the big trout had his lair.

He had chosen it with remarkable sagacity. To throw a fly or even a worm into the pool was nearly impossible; to drop in bait of any sort appeared to be useless. The pool was small, and the bank overhung it; just below was a shallow rippling run which gurgled under the archway; close to the wall the trout used to dart out into the ripple, and then shoot coyly back to his shelter under the bank. I can see the flicker of his tail now. There he stayed, getting bigger and bigger, till from being a hunted quarry he became almost sacred, a sort of fetish, the private property of the club in general, and, naturally, of the Major in particular.

The Major got to regard him with a sort of superstitious reverence, and wove a web of myths and legends about him. Of course, we had *all* nearly caught him; a rotten cast, an ill-dressed fly, a half-second's delay in 'striking,' had alone prevented each one of us from landing him. But nobody else ever got a look in when the Major was fairly started on the theme; and, indeed, he was spoken of as often as not as 'the Major's trout.'

Now Chris felt, I suppose, that the trout was a dangerous rival to her supremacy; or else it was merely the feminine ambition to achieve (by any means) what all men had failed to do. I offer these conjectures merely to try to explain—not excuse—her disgraceful conduct.

Several of us had been supping with the Major one Sunday evening. It was a beautiful July night, and we sat in deck chairs in the garden, and smoked, and talked about fishing; we could not do much else but talk just then, for the water had been too low and bright to be useful. Chris was there, too, of course. I

remember now that she was curiously quiet, and sat nursing her fox-terrier and saying very little.

The big trout came up in the talk. I think everyone but the Major was a bit sick of the subject. *Avec son Être Suprême il commençait à nous ennuyer*; but he had got some novice to listen to him, and talked on till we all got up to go. Then the novice left, protesting—

'I don't care, Major Royce. A good double Stewart, and a worm, and the water a bit dark, and he'd be caught!'

CHRIS WAS THERE, TOO, OF COURSE

'Sir,' said the Major majestically, 'that trout will *never* be caught!'

Next morning I started for an early bathe in a shady pool about half a mile below the bridge. On my way, as I passed The Lodge gates, I saw Tommy a few yards ahead of me. Thinking he had very likely got up for a swim too, I gave a friendly shout; but Tommy, to my amaze, gave one hunted look behind and fled in the direction of the river. This struck me as queer, and I went on faster. A bit of sloping ground showed me Tommy still ahead and still running. I began to run too. Then I fetched up suddenly. Below me was the bridge, and just below the bridge

I espied a slim barefooted figure—unmistakably Chris! Her serge skirt was tucked up to her knees, and in one hand she carried the Major's largest landing-net.

She waded in gingerly at first, making little wry faces at the sharp stones; then, getting bolder, she plunged and strode into the middle of the swirling current, which was up to her knees, and running strongly enough to give her some difficulty in keeping her feet. What could she be up to? She scrambled about among the boulders, with an odd appearance of stealthy caution, and then I saw her red Tam-o'-Shanter disappear under the bridge. This was too much for my curiosity. I followed that scarlet cap as if it had been a Will-o'-the-wisp. Chris, intent on her mysterious pursuit, never heard me. I saw her crouching under the archway, and heard, in her girlish treble, 'Now, Tommy, now! Chuck it in!'

There was a splash, a jerk of the net, a gleam of something shiny and scaly, and a despairing shriek from Chris! She had missed her footing on the slippery bottom.

'Twist the net!' I yelled, plunging to her rescue; and making a grab in the half-dark, I caught her and the net in a promiscuous embrace. Safe among the meshes hung the big trout, caught at last!

Ten seconds later we were all gasping on the bank. Chris was dripping wet, severely bruised, and nearly weeping with excitement. I offered my handkerchief to bathe the bruises, and she tucked her pretty bare feet under her frock, blushing furiously. Well might she blush for her scandalous poaching! But who was I to rebuke her? Was I not *particeps criminis*?

'Miss Christina!' I said severely.

'Oh, don't!' said Chris hysterically. 'Kill him, please! Oh, isn't he a beauty? And oh! what *will* Uncle Robert say?'

'I know *one* thing he'll say,' I rejoined grimly. 'And I am bound, as the club secretary, to report all poachers. I ought to report me—I mean you.'

'Both of us—all of us!' said Chris wildly. 'No, not Tommy—I persuaded him into it; I promised him five shillings and my old rod!'

Bribery and corruption!

'Miss Christina,' I said, 'you've disgraced us all. I am a ruined man. I shall be kicked out of the club—I had better go and drown myself at once, perhaps. But, by Jove! what a splendid fish he is! How *did* you hit on such a dodge to get him?'

SHE MISSED HER FOOTING ON THE SLIPPERY BOTTOM

'I thought of it all of a sudden,' said Chris, drying her eyes. 'I saw he always went down that same little run when he was startled from up above—and the corner of the wall keeps you nicely out of sight, you know—and——'

'It was abominable—it was disgraceful—it was—magnificent!' I cried, flinging morality to the winds.

Magnificent, but not war! War? It was cold-blooded murder; and here we were in the murderer's usual dilemma—what to do with the body!

It seemed so much trouble wasted, and such an insult to our noble victim, to burn or bury him—like Eugene Aram; and we couldn't quite devour him raw on the spot.

At this moment—quite unexpectedly—Tommy spoke, and impressively.

'Give him to me,' he said, 'and you two run home. I'll manage it.'

Tommy was the least guilty. Consequently he was the coolest, I suppose. Chris and I, being desperate, decided to trust to his leadership.

From this point onwards, Tommy took the principal *rôle*—Chris and I had merely to be the tragic chorus.

'Run home and change,' repeated Tommy, 'and *you* come to breakfast at our house—you often do, you know.' (As, indeed, I did.)

So Chris and I jogged off—a wet, disreputable couple—and in another hour or less I walked up to The Lodge and was hailed by the Major's jovial voice through the open French window.

'Come in, Vincent! Been down for a dip? Grand morning, isn't it?'

'Good morning, Mr. Vincent,' said Chris demurely. She looked perfectly unconcerned—crime sits easily on woman!

I ate I knew not what, and talked I knew not how. What had become of Tommy and the trout?

At this moment Tommy entered. And in his hand, to my horror, he carried a handkerchief which 'more expressed than hid' the unmistakable shape of the big trout!

In utter silence Tommy walked straight up to the Major and laid the trout on the table before him.

The Major went perfectly white. He grasped the arms of his chair, and turned upon his son such a face of petrified rage that I felt as if Tommy would shrivel where he stood.

'If Dad had only sworn at me,' he said afterwards, 'I shouldn't have cared. But when he looked at me that way—oh lor!'

At last the Major said hoarsely, 'What is this, sir?'

Tommy gulped. 'It's the big trout!' he said.

'And how the devil did you get it?'

'I didn't get it!' said the truthful Tommy.

'Then who did? And what infernal tricks have you been up to?'

'This morning,' said Tommy, 'I was down by the river chucking pebbles——'

'Confound your pebbles!'

TOMMY WALKED STRAIGHT UP TO THE MAJOR

'Into the water,' went on Tommy; 'and I saw two ragged, dirty-looking beggars on the bank, just by the bridge—a big chap and a tow-headed little scamp with bare legs, not much bigger than me' (I stole a glance at Chris); 'and they had the—the——' Tommy gulped convulsively again, and I felt cold all over. 'They had *That*'—pointing to the corpse—'in a landing-net!'

The Major dropped his head and groaned. Then glaring at Tommy—

'What were they like? Did you know them? How did you get the fish? Confound you, sir! answer me;' and he rose from his chair and took Tommy by the shoulders.

'I told 'em to give me the fish, and they didn't want to,' said Tommy, raising candid eyes to the Major's face. 'The little beggar had it, and I collared it. Then they cut and run, and I came home.'

'You young idiot,' said the Major wrathfully, 'why didn't you go after them?'

'I did run a bit,' said Tommy.

'Couldn't catch them? *I* sha'n't believe in your sprinting powers now,' snorted the Major. 'Rascals! rascals!'

'Well, Major,' I struck in, 'it's a horrible business. But at all events *we've* got the trout, and *they* haven't. Tommy, what was the big chap like? I might know him; I know most of the poachers hereabouts.'

'An ugly beggar,' said Tommy, 'dressed something like a gentleman.'

'Some rascally keeper turned poacher,' I said to the Major. Then I reverently lifted the big fish in both my hands. 'I wonder what he weighs?' I said.

'By George!' said the Major. 'Christina, my dear, go and get the scales!'

We calmed the Major down gradually. Chris did a good deal of that. The trout lay in state that afternoon, for all to admire. He really was a noble fish, in first-rate condition, and weighed 3 lb. 11 oz. precisely. The news of his capture and his rescue spread like wildfire, and the Major by the end of the day was boasting of Tommy's pluck and presence of mind.

But he didn't appreciate it as much as we did.

We had the trout for supper, and a princely dish he made. He ought to have risen and shamed us, like Southey's miraculous poultry—but he didn't, and the graceless Chris had two helpings.

'Tommy, you're an angel!' said Chris that night. And she gave him a hug which he bore with Spartan composure.

I said, 'Tommy, you are a genius. Some day you will be Premier, no doubt. In the meanwhile this may help you to remember an ugly beggar whom you got out of a scrape.'

'It was all quite true,' said Tommy seriously.

Chris married money. If she fishes now, it is for the stately salmon; she is attended by a dignified gillie, and her exploits are published in the sporting column of the *Gentlewoman*.

But she will never forget that 'crowded hour of glorious life' spent in the capture of the Major's big trout.

Tommy is a distinguished 'wet-bob' at Eton. He will go far, that young man.

A WELSH GAME OF THE TUDOR PERIOD

BY A. G. BRADLEY

CONSIDERING the great numerical inferiority of Wales to the least of the other three kingdoms, the fact of its players being able to, more or less, hold their own in International football must be a source of much justifiable pride to those of its people who care for such things. To any outsider, the maintenance of so good a standard must seem remarkable, but to one who knows anything of Wales it must appear doubly so, in view of the consistent antagonism of the powerful nonconformist ministry and their officers to wholesome out-door sports of all kinds.

Could it be possible, however, that the Welsh capacity for football is not so exotic as it seems, but dates back to the Tudor period when a provincial game of theirs, singularly akin in principle to Rugby football, flourished exceedingly and was held in great esteem? The thought perhaps is far-fetched, but at any rate it may serve as an admirable excuse for recalling the violent not to say humorous fashion in which the people of a part of Wales at any rate used to take their pleasure, and for introducing a short sketch of an ancient game that might beyond a doubt well stand as the progenitor of Rugby football. In the 'Description of Pembrokeshire' by George Owen of Henllys, Lord of Kemes,[1] a local Elizabethan chronicler of great note, whose works Mr. Henry Owen of Withybush in the same county has lately edited, occurs a memorable and lengthy description of this truly amazing and popular pastime. It was one form, no doubt, of the

[1] The *Description of Pembrokeshire*, by George Owen of Henllys, Lord of Kemes, edited with notes and appendix by Henry Owen, B.C.L. Oxon., F.S.A. (Cymmrodorion Record series).

ancient Celtic game of 'Hurling,' but I will proceed at once to the notice of it and leave my readers to draw what analogies they please.

The sport in question was known as 'Knappan,' and the writer introduces us to it as played in the Celtic half of Pembroke and in South Cardiganshire. The name was immediately, though not ultimately, derived from the ball made use of, which was of box or yew, and a little smaller, probably, than a club croquet ball of the present day; while to make it slippery and hard to hold it was boiled in tallow. Substitute hurling for kicking, abolish boundaries and all limitations, recall the old days when fifty to a hundred played upon a side in Rugby Close, and one or two kindred arenas; multiply these by ten, and some sort of notion may then be formed of this once-popular Welsh pastime. In one particular, however, the Welsh knappan players came closer to the latest of our moderns. For since dropping has practically died out of the Rugby game, and passing and carrying become nearly everything, it reverts in this particular very closely indeed to the practice of the old Welsh players, who, as will be seen, followed the same tactics, only hurling the ball when they had no better alternative.

Our chronicler begins by introducing himself to us as an old player: 'For that I have often times been an agent and *patient* at this unruly exercise, and often have felt the smarte that I have written (especially of the horseplaye), which signs and seales I carrye in my head, hands and other parts of my body.' Some remains of the game of knappan seem to have lingered in South Wales till nearly the close of the last century. But according to our Elizabethan author, it appears by his time, instead of ameliorating with advancing civilisation, to have grown still more savage, and on this account to be even then in danger of decay. There were at that time, he tells us, five official matches played annually, many scratch games being privately arranged on off days, usually Sundays. The details of the Pembrokeshire programme are preserved, and in modern style the county fixtures may be thus briefly recorded:—

Shrove Tuesday: Nevarne *v.* Newport, at Burye Sands.
Easter Monday: Meling *v.* Eglwysferrow, at Pont Gynon.
Low Easter Day: Penrith *v.* Penbedw, at Pwll Du.
Ascension Day: Kemes *v.* Emlyn and Cardiganshire, at St. Meigans.
Corpus Christi: Kemes *v.* Emlyn and Cardiganshire (return), at St. Meigans.

The two latter, we are told, were the most important of these annual fixtures, 'two thousand foot besides horsemen being often there engaged.' The other games usually arose from matches being made for wagers by two gentlemen of the country, after the fashion so familiar in earlier cricket history. These, says our informant, 'often fell out to be the greatest plaies,' a statement which, after noting the battalions engaged at the Kemes *v.* Emlyn match, rather takes one's breath away. The two sportsmen would on such occasion proceed to divide the parishes, hundreds, and even counties between them, each striving to bring the greatest number into the field, 'each entreating all his friends and kinsmen in every parish to come, and bring his parish wholly with him.' No wonder they were great 'plaies.' Besides the players, too, all the non-combatants of the country-side gathered as spectators, including victuallers, tapsters, merchants, mercers, and pedlars, who pitched booths and tents, and carried on a roaring trade. If the actual promoters of these matches had money on them, their following, we are assured, fought for honour and glory pure and simple.

'First for the fame of their country in general, next every particular (one) to wynn prayse for his activitie and prowess, which two considerations ardently inflame the minds of the youthful people to strive to the death for glory and fame, which they esteem dearer unto them than worldlie wealth.' These sentiments do not wholly tally, I imagine, with those of modern football, so we will follow our friend into the field without further delay. 'The combatants then having come together about one or two o'clock in the afternoon, a crye is made,' when all proceed to divest themselves of their clothing, save only a thin pair of breeches, their head, body, legs and feet being quite bare. As to the latter, however, it could have been no such great trial to the peasantry, who in Wales were often accustomed to go barefoot. The better sort, no doubt, retained their shoes. Nor is it wholly unsuggestive of a cockhouse match under the genuine old Rugby code of thirty years ago, when we are told, with some superfluity, that if a player 'leave but his shirt on his back, in the furie of the game it is torn to pieces.' It is not surprising that men were officially told off to guard the clothes—such a pile of them as there must have been! As for the rules of the game, these were simple enough in all conscience, but what they lacked in elaboration they surely gained in the lordly scale of the arena and in the profound contempt for space and distance, which distinguished them. There were no 'goles,'

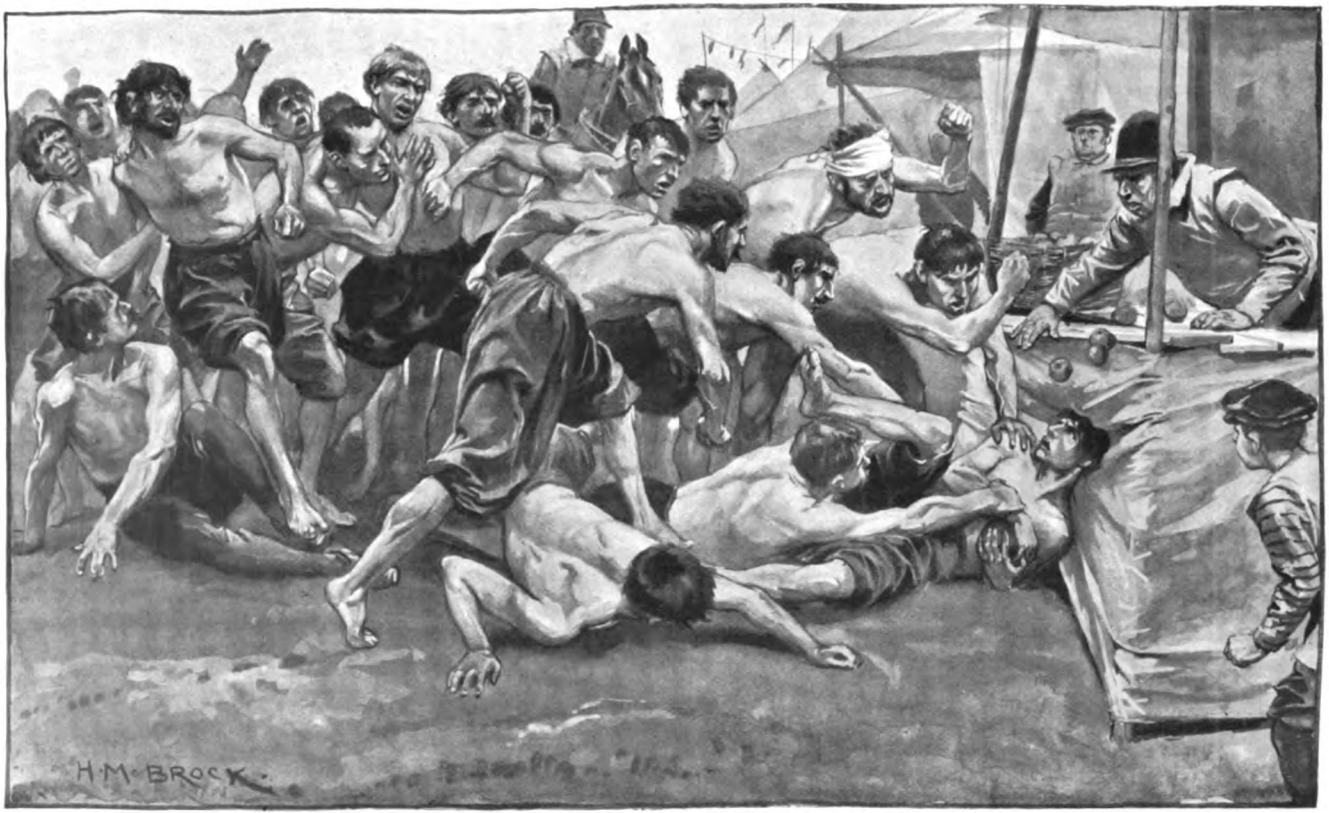
naïvely remarks our ex-player, 'for there was no need of any.'

To reduce his lengthy disquisitions, excellent and humorous though they are, to plain English, the victory was not definitely achieved till one side or the other had got wholly away with the ball—carried it, that is to say, so far beyond the original 'kick off' that there was no hope of getting it back before night fell and ended the fray. Two miles, our informant tells us, was in no sense a sufficient distance to destroy hope in the side that had lost that much ground. So long as there was light, in fact, there was hope. The object of our modern players in all games akin to football is to force the ball into the enemy's ground. The aim of these primitive sportsmen was to carry it as far as they possibly could into their own, though under the conditions in which they played their game such a difference is, after all, of trifling moment. The game was commenced by the knappan being hurled straight up in the air between the two throngs of combatants, and forthwith the great multitude, amid the cheers of a still larger concourse of spectators, fell to. It was the writer's privilege (a doubtful one the moderns will say) to play Rugby football in what may be termed the Homeric age of that great game, when it was conducted on the principle of the more the merrier, and fifty or sixty not infrequently were ranged upon a side; when the now well nigh lost art of drop-kicking was the business of the 'backs,' and the honour of the 'forward,' even after he had been collared or hacked over, was involved in sticking to the ball till his face was jammed in the mud by the weight of a score or so of perspiring mortals piled on top of him. I would draw no invidious comparisons between those strenuous contests of three or four score independent atoms and the reduced numbers and elaborate organisation of to-day. I only allude to the former because those who can recall them will, perhaps, be better able than their more scientific successors to imagine what the spectacle was like when the champion sprinter of Kemes, let us say, was carrying the ball, with the able-bodied of the two parishes of Pembroke and half Cardiganshire at his heels. 'It is a straunge sight,' says our authority, 'to see one thousand or one thousand five hundred naked men to come neere together in a cluster in following the knappan.' Again: 'If the knappan hapneth to the hands of a good footman he presently sengleth himself and runneth and breaketh out of the bodie of the game into some plain grounde in the swiftest sort he can, which being perceeved all the companie followeth where the good footmanship of all is discerned being a

comfortable sight to see five or six hundred good footeman to follow in chase a single or two as grey hound or hare.'

I am bound to confess that the most Homeric contests of the old Rugby game fade into insignificance before the performances of these ancient Welshmen. 'In the furie of the chase they respect neither hedge, ditch, pale or wall, hill, dale, bushes, river or rocke, but all seemeth plain unto them, wherein also they show such agilitie in running, such activitie in leaping, such strength and skilfull deliverance in hurling, such bouldness in assualting, such stoutness in resisting, such policie in inventing, such skill in preventing.' In short, they show much more talent at this play, our friend thinks, than they are capable of in the affairs of life. The bitter cry of the British parent, then, is after all no new thing. In one sense the knappan players more closely resemble the modern exponents of football than they do those of our youth; for all the hurly-burly, the main feature of this game was 'passing.' The man who got the ball ran till he was tackled, or was about to be collared. In the latter case he threw the ball, if possible, to one of his own side; 'for beside the corps or mayne bodie of the play there are certain scouts or fore runners whose charge is always to keep before the knappans whichever way it passes.' If, however, the player when collared had not already thrown the ball, he was summoned three times to deliver it. If he then surrendered it, he was 'left in peese without the bastinado.' If, however, in the interests of the game (we must suppose this would happen when few or none of his own side were up), it is good policy to stick to the ball for a bit, his opponents at once proceed to punch his head in the most violent fashion. At the time of our informant's writing the game, it appears, had degenerated greatly from the mild and friendly spirit which characterised it when he first began to play. For in those halcyon days, when the man with the ball, on being tackled, refused to deliver it upon the third summons, he was merely banged on the face and head with the naked fist. But latterly, it would appear, rocks, when they came handy, were used, as being more efficacious! What, indeed, was the fortitude of Smith Major, who carried the smart of half a dozen sounding hacks together with the ball behind the enemy's goal-posts, compared to that of a man who submitted to be hammered on the head with stones for the honour of his parish?

So much for the tactics of the infantry in these mammoth contests. The cavalry seem to have hovered about the flanks of the game, and taken any opportunity that offered to get away



HIS OPPONENTS AT ONCE PROCEED TO PUNCH HIS HEAD IN THE MOST VIOLENT FASHION

with the knappan, pursued by a motley crowd of both horse and foot. As 'tackling,' or fist fighting, was out of the question on horseback, these cavaliers carried oaken cudgels, which they used freely on the head and shoulders of the man in possession of the ball, should he fail to drop it. Here also, says our author, there was a great degeneracy from former times. For then the horsemen's sticks were restricted to hazel, and to a size that could be drawn through a regulation ring. Then, too, it was not the custom to deal out punishment till the holder of the knappan had been challenged three times to deliver it. Now, he declared, they used oaken cudgels as 'heavy as they could well carrie,' and not only dropped on to their opponent without any such warning, but actually took advantage of the occasion to 'pay off old scores.' Methinks there is a not unfamiliar ring about this. At the same time, any ferocity those of us who remember the strenuous and racy games of the 'fifties and sixties' may recall was surely child's play compared to the *mêlée* into which a game of knappan devolved itself when party spirit ran high. Let our old player speak for himself. 'On every small occasion,' he says, 'nowadays they fall by the ears, which being once kindled between two, all persons of both sides become parties, soe that sometimes you shall see five or six hundred naked men beating in a cluster together as fast as the fists can goe, and their part must be taken, every man with his company, soe that you shall see two brothers, the one beating the other, the man the master, the friend against friend. . . . Nor will they scruple to take up stones, and with these in their fists beat their fellows.' Then, charging pell-mell into the surging crowd, go the horsemen with their oaken cudgels, that would 'strike down an oxe or horse,' and fall to beating the footmen and one another, 'sparing neither head or face nor anie part of the body.' This lasts, it seems, till a happy inspiration or want of breath prompts some to hold up their hands and cry 'Heddwch! heddwch!' or 'Peace! peace!' which sometimes, but not always, we are told, has the desired effect, 'and to their plaie they goe anewe.' Onlookers of an unathletic turn, we gather, had to be very careful how they approached the game when the blood of the combatants waxed hot. This we can well believe, though to keep clear of such extended manœuvres must have been no easy matter. When such an unfortunate, however, was caught in the meshes of the swiftly moving conflict, it was customary 'to make him a player by giving him a bastinado or two, if a horseman, or by lending him half a dozen cuffes be he on foot.'

Among the more noteworthy features, however, of this delightful game were the tactics adopted by a side which found itself in a hopeless numerical minority, mustering, we suppose, only five hundred strong, as against, let us say, a thousand brought into the arena by its opponents. 'One of the weaker side' on such occasions, 'hapning on the knappan, clappeth the same against his belly, holding it fast with both his hands. Another of his company claspeth him about the mydle, turning face to face. Then cometh more of the same syde and layeth gripes on and round about them, so that you shall see one hundred or one hundred and twenty men thus clustered together as bees in a swarme, which the other party seek to undo by hauling and pulling.' Never, surely, have there been such formidable scrimmages as these! They often lasted a quarter of an hour, we are told, and as soon as one was broken the policy of the weaker side was to form another as soon as possible, 'and so to weare out the day and give over playe without disgrace to themselves and their country.' They had no gate money in those days; nor was the spectacular sportsman, as we have seen, then regarded as of much account—a poor creature, in fact, to be bastinadoed or cuffed if he ventured too near. Whatever the failings of these sixteenth-century athletes, it is quite certain that the modern notion of hiring people to play your games was not even in the germ. 'Having tyred myself, says our author, 'in describing this unruly plaie, I will hear end with a merrie jest or two.' We must confess his jests are excellent ones, and only regret the unavoidable loss they must suffer by curtailing them in modern English. One 'gentleman of note,' for instance, we are told, was anxious to take part for the first time in a match, and had mounted himself, as he conceived well, upon a big gelding, and cherished ambitions of perchance getting away altogether with the knappan. Having successfully 'made means' to get the latter passed to him, he at once put spurs to his horse and took his own line across-country, with the whole army of horse and foot in pursuit. For some time his 'mount' justified his expectations, and getting a clear lead, this injudicious person, with the object, no doubt, of freeing his right arm, proceeded to stuff the knappan into his hose. The gelding, however, did not prove such a stayer as he was a pacemaker, and in course of time the rider was overtaken by 'an old grey-headed country swayne, hoarse in voice and rude in manners, mounted upon a little lean nag furnished only with a pad and collar.' This bucolic summoned the 'gentleman of good note' in the usual fashion to deliver the knappan; but the latter, scorning

SHOWERED BLOW AFTER BLOW UPON THE HEAD AND SHOULDERS OF THE SUPERCILIOUS HORSEMAN

so ill-looking a fellow, made no response, but held on his way.

The veteran, who had now no trouble in keeping his old screw on terms with the showy but distressed gelding, at once proceeded to play the game in all its rigour, and showered blow after blow upon the head and shoulders of the supercilious horseman. A croquet ball would, I take it, be a difficult thing to extract out of one's breeches pocket while going at a hand gallop, even under less disturbing conditions than those described. The extraction of a knappan from the inner recesses of an Elizabethan gallant's trunk hose was evidently a most distressing problem. For it was not till this fashionable sportsman had suffered terrible punishment at the hands of the relentless rustic that he succeeded in 'dealing the knappan,' which he did, we are not surprised to hear, with the 'Curse of heaven and himself' on the whole business.

The other 'merrie jest' of our author strikes us as even more excellent. On this occasion an experienced player, still better mounted, had defied all pursuit, and carried off the ball definitely (into the adjoining county I presume), and of course gained the day for his side, as well as great triumph for himself. At the next match he was naturally eager to sustain his reputation, but rode up and down, it seems, for half the day without getting a chance at the ball. Greatly chagrined, he at length determined to try what, with little forethought, he seemed to think would prove an excellent practical joke. So when the tide of battle rolled on to 'a fayre playne,' he broke from the crowd and 'put his horse to run away race,' making believe he had the knappan.

One can well understand that there must at times have been great confusion of mind as to the actual whereabouts of the ball, particularly when the footmen were all pommelling one another with their fists and the horsemen hammering each other with oak cudgels. On this occasion a considerable body of horse, at any rate, were entirely at fault, and set out after our cavalier in brave fashion, entirely persuaded that he had the knappan. The latter was evidently not so well mounted as on the occasion of his recent triumph, nor, perhaps, had he considered the grievous situation which would be his in the event of capture. This very thing, however, happened; for when challenged to deliver the ball, it was in vain he protested that he was not really in possession. His protests were drowned in the shower of blows that rained upon his person. His assailants evidently suspected that he too had got the ball in his hose, nor would they believe

for a moment the agonising oaths with which he sought, in the midst of his punishment, to force the truth upon them. He must have been, I think, a tricky character, for his opponents, our chronicler quaintly observes, 'would not believe his oath without a booke, which he had no leisure to hold.' We should imagine not! The end of it was that this wily schemer was struck to the ground and his nether garments torn off him before he was left, sore and bleeding, to lament the failure of his clever plan, and to conclude that honesty, even in sport, was the best policy.

When the Spaniards were on the coast, too, in the year 1588, a stranger happened to come upon the scene when a match of knappan was going on in which six or seven hundred players were engaged, 'whereof most were hurt and bloody.' He was greatly concerned at the sight, and asked a Welsh friend how they would be pacified. The Welshman assured him it was only play, and would be taken in good part. 'If this be but play,' replied the other, 'I would the Spaniards were here to see our plays, certes they would be bodily fear of our warre.' The picture of the knappan players returning from the field should, I think, not be omitted, for it is quite evident that, however vicious the performance itself, it was a point of honour not to carry its feuds into private life. 'You shall see gamesters returning home from the playe with broaken heads, black faces, bruised bodies, and lame legges, yett laughing and merrily jesting at their harmes, telling theire adversaries how he break his head, to another that he stroke him on the face, and how he repayed the same to him again, and all this in good myrth, without grudge or hatred; and if any be in arrereges to the other they score it up till the next playe, and in the meantime will continue loving friends.'

AN OLD INDIAN HUNTER

BY E. B. OSBORN

ASSUREDLY it was one of my lucky days when old John Marceille —as a matter of fact his 'given name' was Jean Baptiste— invited me to accompany him on a duck-shooting expedition to Island Lake; for up to that time I had met with no really competent professor of 'Indian hunting,' and had, in consequence, come to the conclusion that the many yarns told by white settlers about the doings of certain old-fashioned practitioners of the art were nothing more nor less than ingenious tangles of 'onlikely Yankee lies,' as they say in Western Canada. But those two or three days spent with a native hunter of the old school, whose inborn genius had been developed by half a century's experience in the backwoods and on the high prairies, changed my opinion considerably; and, before I had known him for a year, my faith in Fenimore Cooper's 'Pathfinder' and other heroes of my boyhood was as lively as ever.

Though he was at least three parts Indian—his father was a French half-breed 'hunter of the plains,' his mother belonged to a nation of the Wood Crees—and possessed the bronzen complexion, coarse blue-black hair, and hawk's beak peculiar to the red man, in mental power and steadfastness of purpose John Marceille was the equal of most of his Anglo-Saxon neighbours. Accordingly he had always managed to live decently and to keep

up a little home of his own, even in those dismal years when the buffaloes went out and the railways came in, and so many of the half-breed hunters and freighters were compelled to earn their daily bannock by collecting buffalo-bones, to be made into manure for export, by hauling wood and water for the mounted police, or by 'taking treaty' along with the ordinary denizens of the Reserves.

Like many other members of 'the tribe of the *Métis*' this old man was very much of a gentleman, though he lived in a mean little log-hut and had married a very dirty and cantankerous, swampy squaw, who was, however, a most ingenious cook. In all his dealings a fine sense of honour was apparent; and a certain simple-minded courtesy, which seemed to me the perfection of good breeding, made him the most charming of hosts In particular, John Marceille never forgot that courtesy is the better part of charity; and the poor, shiftless, broken-down 'yellow-faces,' whose little 'tepees' of interwoven spruce boughs were so often to be seen behind his house, not only received daily rations of flour and potatoes and salted fish, but were also treated as equals and allowed to play their part in the entertainment of the most distinguished visitors. I dare say there was a drop or two of gentle French blood in his veins—for was not Canada, whence came the forefathers of the *Métis*, built up on the bones of the *ancienne noblesse* of France?—which found an expression in these acts of a kindly and considerate hospitality.

After our hunt at Island Lake—a broad piece of shallow, alkaline water surrounding a great dome-shaped bluff of tamarac—I never arranged a sporting expedition without first of all visiting John Marceille and trying to enlist his services as guide and hunting companion. He had little real love for farming and even less for his wife, whose 'all-round cussedness' was proverbial in the settlement, and old as he was, if only he could find any sort of an excuse for neglecting his farm, would make no bones about coming away at an hour's notice. On one occasion, indeed, we slipped off along a by-trail while she was actually returning from a visit to her nearest neighbour; and when she sighted us from afar, and began to flounder across a stretch of new breaking, waving her skinny brown arms wildly and shrieking out incoherent reproaches, the old man's averted face wore an unctuous look of solemn glee—something far too deep and heartfelt to be expressed in chuckles. A fortnight later, when we sneaked back in the windy dusk of an October day, it was somebody else's turn to score, and the old man was clearly on tenter-hooks; indeed, but

for the fact that our buckboard was well loaded up with wild-fowl, prairie chicken, sandhill crane, and other good gifts, I don't think he would have ventured home that year.

The more I saw of his work by field and flood, the more I was struck with his ability. In the first place, he was a remarkably fine shot, never missing and seldom 'tailoring' his game, although he used a primeval H.B. Co. muzzle-loader, apparently held together by numerous bits of wire and binder-twine, for which no English schoolboy would have bartered a serviceable catapult. But it was not often he gave me an exhibition of marksmanship; for, like most old-timers, he had learned to shoot in days when powder and shot were hard to come by, and the waste of a single charge was looked upon as a deadly sin. You must remember that as often as not the hunters employed by 'The Company' received a small quantity of ammunition in lieu of provisions; so that the unthrifty hunter—like the man who lost his small change in the 'Pilgrim's Progress'—went on his way 'with many a hungry belly,' and was sometimes reduced to a diet of poplar-bark. Many years ago, while hunting in the 'country of the North Wind'—Kewatin is the name on the maps—old John had been compelled to live upon 'jack-rabbit's pemmican' for a season, and that bitter experience of a very cheerless form of vegetarianism had given him a somewhat exaggerated idea of the value of ammunition. Accordingly, his ideal of a really sporting venture was to slip up to a string of water-fowl disporting themselves at the edge of a slough, or a family of chicken following *materfamilias* across a meadow of the prairie, wait patiently until they had deployed into line, then let off his gun at short range, and bag half a dozen or so with one shot. The way in which he contrived to conceal his movements from their watchful beady eyes even in places where there was hardly enough cover to hide a gopher, and the cleverness with which he imitated the various 'calls' so as to bring his prey within easy distance, were really amazing. When, however, he thought it worth while he would sometimes pull off a thoroughly sporting shot; and he could reload his antiquated single-barrelled muzzle-loader so quickly that anybody who heard but could not see him at work would have sworn he was using a double-barrelled breech-loader.

After all it was his practical knowledge of the habits of the wild creatures of the North-west which made him the best of hunting companions. It is not too much to say that he knew Saskatchewan—which is about as big as France—as well almost as a Scotch gamekeeper knows his own moorside; so that he

could always tell what to look for in any particular spot, and just where and exactly how to find it. In the matter of 'tracking' he was a very Sherlock Holmes, and could follow game almost as well in the spring or in the fall, when a broken twig or a displaced leaf forms the only available evidence, as in winter-time, when the great palimpsests of the snows if rightly read supply the hunter with all the information he requires.

When hunting from a camp, by the way, he generally made a point of coming in and going out each day by the same trail—a habit of his which at first puzzled me not a little. His reason for this practice is worth considering. Moose and deer and all the small fur-bearing animals, so he said, will seldom or never cross a man's trail; and, when they happen to come upon it, will often turn off and travel for miles in a direction nearly parallel to that of his scent; so that the hunter who came in by the way he went out, and now and again forked off for short distances, was likely to do better than if he tried to look over a lot of fresh ground in the afternoon.

One decidedly sportsmanlike trait was his dislike of the use of poison, which he never used, albeit he must have known that it is cheaper and more effective than trapping. Among many other gifts he had the Indian's discriminating eye. Not only could he see a flight of birds many miles away, but he could also tell what they were and exactly how many they were. On one occasion I made this faculty of his the subject of a little experiment. After drawing a number of noughts and crosses on a chip, I moved it before his eyes for a few seconds—not more than five or six. As long as the total number did not exceed fifty he could always tell me without hesitation the exact numbers of the two species of signs, and for much greater numbers he could always give a pretty close guess. In the matter of hearing—perhaps owing to his age—he was inferior to many of the Reserve Indians, who can count the number of horses in an approaching patrol of the N.W.M.P. when they are still miles away.

Unlike the vast majority of the French half-breeds, John Marceille could express himself in good 'Prairie English'—which is not by any means the same thing as the hackneyed dialect of the Western States—albeit a trick of dropping into Cree whenever he became excited, and his frequent use of the long-forgotten proverbs and bywords of the old-time *voyageurs* and *coureurs des bois* made it somewhat difficult for a 'tenderfoot' to follow him all the way. Though he had the gift of holding his tongue in quite a number of languages, he did not

always choose to exercise it, and after a good day's work and a good hearty supper—to say nothing of a glass of grog—would often become quite garrulous on the subject of the old fur-trading days *quorum pars magna fuit*. If, however, we had had bad luck, he would chew the quid of reflection, and never open his mouth all the evening except to wish me good-night. Much as I prize my trifling experiences of sport in the Saskatchewan and the many practical hints I received from him, I prize even more the occasional glimpses—too few and never to be renewed!—which his rambling discourses afforded of the spacious life of the North-west that was.

The yearly 'Running of the Buffalo' by the hunters of the Red River Settlement in the good old days, when the chief factors of the Hudson's Bay Company ruled from the Bay to the Pacific and from 'the Line' up to 'the Circle,' was a theme of which the old man never tired; and as I have never read any adequate account of that 'almightiest big picnic ever you heard on'—to quote the enraptured phrase of yet another old-timer of the Saskatchewan—I shall here set down in order all that he told me from time to time about the 'Summer Hunt,' together with a few facts gleaned from other trustworthy sources. As early as 1820 the number of ox-carts assembled for the summer hunt exceeded five hundred, and one year, between 1840 and 1850—he could never remember the exact date—when John Marceille drew a hunter's pay for the first time, no fewer than fifteen hundred carts and waggons and more than two thousand men, women, and children came to the time-honoured trysting-place in a hollow of the high prairies, a day's journey from Fort Garry. A hunter's wage consisted in those days of Hudson's Bay 'blankets' or notes to the value of 3*l*. sterling; the women, whose duty it was to skin and cut up the carcases and make them into the famous pemmican, received 2*l*. 5*s*. apiece; and each of the boys and girls, who assisted the women and did the 'chores' for the whole camp, obtained the sum of 1*l*. as a *quid pro quo*. Seeing that the summer hunt generally lasted a full three months nobody can say that these people were well paid for their work, especially when it is remembered that buffalo-running was an arduous and risky pursuit, and that now and again Blackfeet and other 'wicked' Indians would take it into their heads to hunt the outlying hunters, though they seldom ventured to meddle with the main parties.

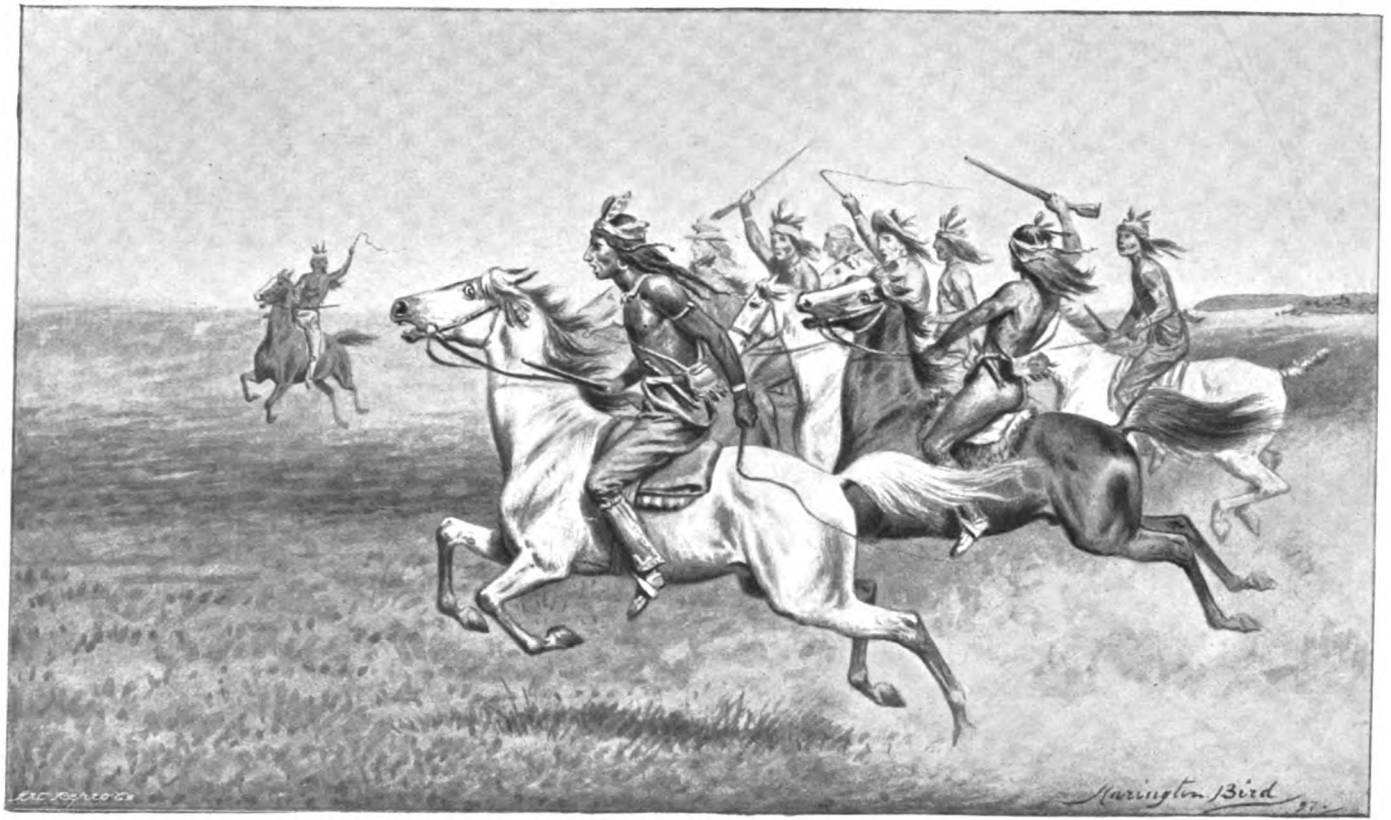
Many of the hunters of the plains were also farmers in a small way, so that a start was not possible until after seeding.

For the same reason it was necessary to return before harvest-time. But as soon as the spring rains were fallen and their long ribbon-like plough-lands were newly clad in a shimmering silken vesture of delicate green, they would hitch up their trains of oxen or 'Shaganappies'—*i.e.* native ponies—and trundle off in their springless wooden-tired carts along the Southern Freighters' trail, which ran from Red River to St. Paul's in Minnesota, and was in those days as grassless and 'well-beated' as the famous Santa Fé trail between Arkansas and New Mexico, to the time-honoured rendezvous. There they would camp until all the hunters on the roll had arrived—spending the interval in casting bullets, putting a last polish on their long-barrelled flintlocks, and mending their carts—which did not contain a pennyweight of iron—with wooden pegs of birch. If anyone had succeeded in begging or borrowing a dram or two of 'pink-eye' whisky he would save it for the eve of the day arranged for the start.

That last evening at home—always supposing the weather was fine—was a time of revelry; and many of the Red River settlers, who did not intend to make the hunt, would come down to the camp to help on the fun. After sundown great watch-fires would be kindled within the circle of carts; and the older hunters would sit on their heels in the wavering firelight, exchanging horns of 'tangle-leg' and tales of adventure in every nook and corner of the unexplored West, while the younger chatted with the women and girls who sat on or under the carts. Then in a curiously sudden expectant hush—that strange inevitable silence which sooner or later falls upon the noisiest of such gatherings—somebody would begin the beautiful lovelorn ditty of '*A la Claire Fontaine*;' long before the end of the first verse all the men would be singing or beating time, and when it came to the refrain,

Il y a longtemps que je t'aime,
Jamais je ne t'oublierai,

the women's voices would soar above the men's in a sudden gush of sound, fresh and clear as the fountain of their ditty. Then, perhaps, 'Lochaber No More' would be sung by the many Scotchmen and Scotch half-breeds in the gathering, and after that saddest and most haunting of all melodies, the dolorous interminable lay of 'Bold Brennan on the Moor' (such rhymed histories of highwaymen were and still are surprisingly popular on the prairies) would be chanted slowly and solemnly by some soloist of established reputation; at last a fiddle would be pulled out of its moose-skin bag, and the stirring strains of the



THE SIGNAL FOR A GENERAL ATTACK

'Red River Jig,' which old John confessed to be 'pins and needles in his legs' whenever and wherever he heard it, brought all assembled to their feet. Next to a plaintive ditty the hunters loved a rollicking dance; and having once begun, they would not stop until the sun was under their feet and their bonfires were but heaps of warm crumbling ash.

On these occasions particular attention was paid to the moon. If her appearance was such that 'a man could hang up his kettle handily on her horn,' everybody knew there would be at least a month of fine weather to follow; if not, the Indian by-word, 'buffalo grow fat on a week's rain,' would be quoted with approval.

At sunrise next morning the roll was called over, and immediately afterwards, at a meeting of the chief hunters, a leader and his staff, captains, guides, and a crier were appointed. The leader had authority over the whole party, and at the beginning and end of each day's march issued general orders through the members of his staff, who also acted as police: the captains with their men took it in turn to patrol the camp and mount guard; the guides, in addition to conducting the hunters from one good camping-place to another, were also the standard-bearers of the party; and the crier, who called the people together whenever the 'law of the hunt' had been violated, not only proclaimed the sentence of the court, but also executed it. This 'law of the hunt' was a very simple matter. Stealing, the running of buffalo on the Sabbath day or before the general order to do so had been given, the firing off of guns when in the country where the herd was known to be, forking off, lagging behind, or going before without the leader's permission—these were the only offences for which definite punishments were assigned. Stealing was regarded as the most serious of all possible crimes, and the punishment enacted was thought to be correspondingly severe. If anybody was convicted of theft, even if he had stolen only a sinew, he was solemnly brought into the middle of the camp and his name called out three times by the crier, the epithet 'thief' being added at each repetition. The half-breed hunters of the plains justly prided themselves upon their honesty, the disgrace of being publicly called a thief appeared to them infinitely greater than the shame of a flogging, and was taken to heart even by the most reckless of that devil-may-care race.

For a first offence of any other sort the offender's saddle and bridle were cut up; if he offended a second time his coat was pulled off his back and cut up; and for the third offence he received a sound flogging with a 'black snake,' or leathern whip.

It was the duty of the officers, one and all, to see that the camp was properly set out at night. The carts were drawn up in a close circle, and within this the tents were pitched in double and treble rows, the women and children sleeping in the innermost. If danger was apprehended the oxen and horses were tethered inside the corral, and the men slept with their guns loaded; otherwise the cattle were allowed to graze on the open prairie.

Long before the buffalo were sighted they could be *heard* by the experienced hunter. Though he was then a mere boy, hardly in his teens, old John had a very vivid recollection of entering the summer pasturage of the buffalo for the first time in his life. One windy morning, three weeks after they had left the Red River, his father asked him if he could hear the bulls, and when he said that he could hear nothing but the wind, all the men laughed at him, and his father was not very well pleased. By-an-l-by they came to a badger's hole, and his father pulled him off the cart and told him to put his ear into it, and when he did so, he heard a low far-off rumbling sound 'like the wind in a poplar-bluff, or the noise the Saskatchewan makes when it moves out in the spring,' which was nothing more nor less than the roaring of the bulls—ten thousand of them, I suppose. That happened in the early morning, and it was not until noon that a man standing up on horseback could discern what seemed to be a long streak of greyish cloud, resting on the high western rim of the horizon. When the sun was setting this cloud was resolved into two vast herds of buffalo, all of them moving at the same slow pace and grazing as they went. Everybody wanted to be at them, but the authorities would not hear of it, for a night alarm would sometimes frighten the herds as much as a prairie fire in the fall, and cause them to stampede for fifty miles or more. At about ten o'clock next morning the hunters were made to fall into line, and the crier was ordered to cry the 'Ho!' which was the signal for a general attack.

The quaint expression, 'Here's a ho!' which every native of the North-west utters before gulping down his dram or 'horn' of whisky, is really a reminiscence of this ancient signal to begin the fun, and not, as the more popular explanation would have us believe, a silly reference to the opening phrase of Isaiah lv.

The hunters would enter the chase with their mouths chockful of bullets, loading and firing from horseback, and leaving the ownership of the slain to be settled afterwards. When loading, they poured the powder from the palm of the hand and dropped

a bullet from the mouth into the muzzle of the piece, and they fired without putting it up to the shoulder and in such haste that sometimes the bullet had not had time to fall down the barrel. No wonder that their guns, which cost 'the Company' from fifteen to twenty shillings each, and were not exactly masterpieces of the gunmaker's art, frequently exploded! It was no uncommon sight to see a hunter who lacked a thumb or a finger or two as a consequence of such an accident. Sometimes, also, in the excitement of the moment, he would swallow an ounce or two of lead. Those of the women who had a practical

LOADING ON HORSEBACK

knowledge of herb-doctoring administered their thrice-decocted remedies to the victims of these casualties, and received fees for their trouble, a robe or a bag of pemmican, or the like.

Day after day, week after week, until it was time to turn back or the buffalo had fled into some part of the plains infested by the Indians of the United States, who had no respect for the letters H. B. C. inscribed on the flags, the hunters would harry the rear of the herd, slaying hundreds between sunrise and sunset, and going back on their trail at nightfall to join the women and children and arrange the camp. The work of skinning and breaking up the slaughtered animals and making the choice parts

into the famous pemmican, or cutting them up into long thin shreds to be dried in the sun, fell upon the women and their assistants, whose labours were often prolonged far into the night.

Other curious facts observed by the old-time buffalo-runners deserve to be mentioned. Thus clean killing was not altogether necessary, for the herd could always be relied upon to finish off a wounded comrade, though in so doing they sometimes spoiled the robe. Also the country in which the herd was pasturing for the time being swarmed with grizzly bears, who had acquired a taste for flesh and lived upon the herd all the year round. These four-footed hunters, either because they preferred to do their own butchering or because they respected the rights of fellow-sportsmen, never meddled with the carcases of the beasts which had been shot. Old John had an idea about these grizzlies of the plains, which does not exactly fit in with the theories of naturalists or with the experiences of big-game shooters in the past. According to him, this particular race of bears ceased to exist shortly after the extinction of the buffalo in the seventies, and the bears to be found in the foot-hills of the Rockies are a somewhat different race, neither so big nor so wicked as the others, who sometimes weighed as much as twenty hundredweight.

The Hudson's Bay Company always did their best to prevent the indiscriminate slaughter of the wild animals, upon whose welfare their own ultimately depended, and the buffalo-runners in their employ seldom or never killed either the calves or their dams, so that the extinction of the buffalo cannot justly be attributed to the Company's policy of supplying their many northern posts with pemmican, the most nutritious and most portable of all prepared foods. In old John's opinion we must blame the 'free traders,' more especially the Yankee dealers in peltries, who in 1870 had nearly a score of factories on the Bow and Belly Rivers. Until these people were driven out by the 'red-coat riders' or North-western Mounted Police, that particular corner of the territories was, to use Colonel John Hay's delightful phrase, 'a first-class gilt-edged Hell;' and to judge from the stories of their doings, which are still told over North-western camp fires, their establishments were cities of refuge for all the worst villains of the Western States. These men gave the Indians liquor—the vilest of pink-eye—in exchange for skins and furs, and, in spite of many brutal outrages on the weaker and less warlike nations, never lacked customers, thanks to the Indian's ungovernable lust after fire-water, for which, having tasted it once or twice, he would give anything and go

anywhere. At one time there were more than a thousand Indian hunters in their employ. Of course, the finer furs which were only to be found high in the north seldom or never came to their factories, for in those days only the friends of the Company could obtain the supplies necessary for such a journey, and this army of hunters accordingly would hunt buffalo all the year round and even kill during the spring. Calves were never spared —not even if they were only an hour old—owing to the fact that their tender and supple skins fetched a good price down East, and of the full-grown beasts only the robes and tongues were taken,

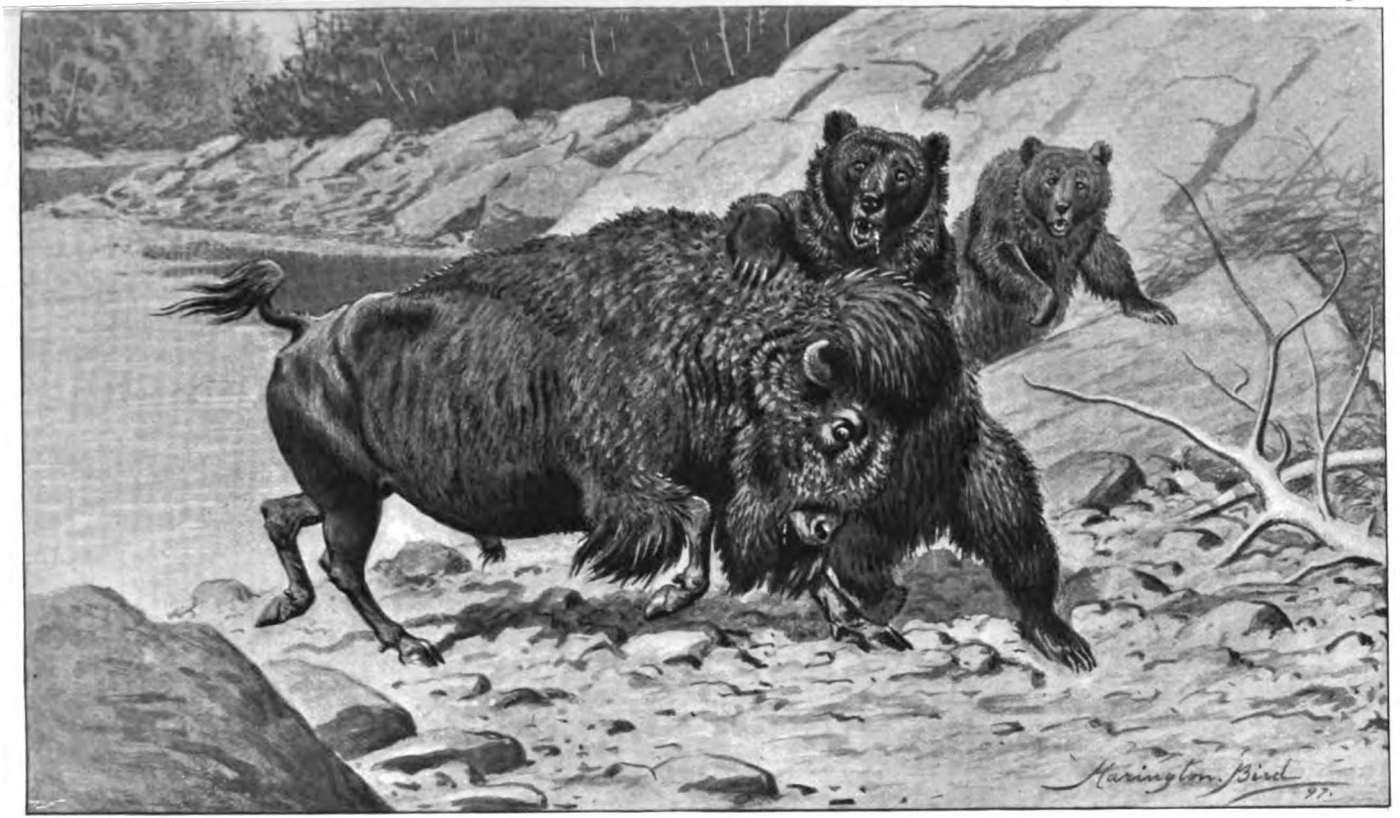
THE HERD COULD ALWAYS BE RELIED UPON TO FINISH OFF A WOUNDED COMRADE

the carcase being left to rot where it fell, though large numbers of the Red River half-breeds hunted again in the fall, or even wintered on the plains in order to get the robes when they were covered with the thick winter's growth of hair. Everything they shot was duly turned into pemmican.

So it will be seen that old John had justifiable reasons for his opinion on this point. And a very similar abuse of their opportunities by the petty traders on the Mackenzie's upper waters is responsible for the scarcity, or perhaps actual extinction—for ten years back only four or five small bands were known to exist in all Athabasca—of the 'wood-buffalo,' once so common in that

region. As soon as the whole of the vast territory to the north of the Saskatchewan River (even as I am writing I can hear the deep thrilling sound of the newly released waters of that noble stream, 'tis the drone-note in nature's slumber song to-night) has been explored and exploited by the miners and their many camp followers, I suppose the moose and the cariboo and the musk-ox will in their turn travel that dark mysterious trail—so deep in the dust of death that the heaviest footfall therein is noiseless—which leads away into the land of the obsolete. The buffalo of the great plains have long since departed to that place, and it will not be long before the last of the Indian and half-breed buffalo-runners has followed to the trysting-place.

When I was told that 'old man Marceille was terrible sick and down-hearted, and the old lady'—*i.e.* his Indian wife—'d be real glad if I'd send him up a bit of a cheerful message,' I had a presentiment that if I wished to see my old friend and hunting companion again I had better take the message myself. He was well on in the seventies, which is a great age for a man of mixed blood, for more than half a century he had roughed it on the high prairies and in the backwoods, and never troubled about keeping a balance of strength at the Bank of Life; and when I came to think of it, I remembered noticing more than once that summer that he had lost something of that vivid brightness of look and stealthy alacrity of movement which distinguish the North-western hunters and trappers from the farmers and other 'more mechanical persons.' We had settled to cross the North Branch as soon as ever the first flurry of November snow had fallen, and to camp out until Christmas or perhaps even longer in the territory which borders on the famous 'Peace Country' of the old fur-traders, and on many a fine summer's evening we had talked over our chances of making a good hunt, until the owl's mellow reduplicated plaint warned us that it was time to turn in if we meant to be on the river at daybreak. Thrice that summer I had pitched my tent on the high river bank a little distance below his shack for a week or so, and had spent my days fishing for sturgeon, 'gold-eye,' pike, &c., in the north branch of the Saskatchewan. During June and July that swift and beautiful stream, which is three hundred yards wide at its confluence with the muddy sluggish 'prairie drain' called the South Branch, is full of clear snow-water from the far off Rockies, and in bright weather is as blue as the Danube is said to be above the Iron Gates, so that, even if an afternoon's angling failed to provide enough gold-eye for the morrow's breakfast, or a pike or two—the old man's old



THE COUNTRY SWARMED WITH GRIZZLY BEARS, WHO HAD ACQUIRED A TASTE FOR FLESH

lady had a knack of stuffing and cooking these fish to perfection—inveigled out of the shadow of his own particular boulder, the ecstasy of the swim through the cool gliding levels of the central current was always a sufficient compensation. One sometimes hears of a species of northern trout—probably 'Hearn's salmon,' which is common enough in many rivers of the Hudson's Bay watershed—being caught on the upper waters of the North Branch, but I never succeeded in finding one hereabouts.

As a rule we visited our sturgeon nets—there were three of them—before breakfasting, which meant an hour's canoe voyage long before the sun looked over the high steep banks of the river. If any of the nets were broken, we sat down 'right there' and mended it, which was uneasy work for a breakfastless man. That was a poor year for sturgeon fishing; nevertheless we caught as much as we cared to eat, and the rest the old man peddled round the neighbourhood, so earning enough to keep himself and his old lady in tobacco for quite a time.

On the last evening of my third visit—it was the end of July, and the fireflies were almost as numerous as the mosquitoes—the old man set up three long sticks at equal distances apart immediately in front of the door of his shack, and then, sitting down in the doorway, began a Cree chant, as full of vain repetitions and apparently as meaningless as the 'counting-out verses' used by children. A long spell of silence followed, broken by a sudden cry of 'one-two-three *mouswa*.' He had been practising the heathenish art of divination from the flight of fireflies formerly used by the Wood Crees, and had learned thereby that we should kill three moose during our winter's hunt. As far as I could understand his explanation, the two spaces of sky defined by the three sticks formed the soothsayer's *templa*; and the number of fireflies seen in the left, or 'bad,' interval was subtracted from the number seen in the 'right,' or interval of good omen. I could not persuade him to repeat the incantation.

The very next time I saw him—alas, for the tragic irony of happening!—it was clear that he had his orders for a longer and more fateful journey. I found him seated in his wife's rocking-chair on the sunny side of his dwelling, with his ramshackle muzzle-loader laid across his knees and a fringed mooseskin coat thrown about his shoulders, and at first sight hoped he was not so ill as I had feared. It was characteristic of the plucky old fellow that up to the very day of his death he insisted upon being dressed as though for hunting, and taken out into the open air. It was not long before I knew that both the messenger and his

message had arrived too late. Though his eyes were wide open, and the calm expression of his face showed that he was not in pain, he took not the slightest notice of my presence, and was unable or unwilling to answer me as long as I spoke in English. When, however, I managed to grind out a word or two of Cree—his mother tongue—a look of childish curiosity came into his faded eyes, and the phrase '*awena eoko?*' (who's this?) fell from his lips suddenly, and with startling clearness. Not another word did he utter during my stay, although his wife—such are the ways of Indian women—rated him in many words for his lack of manners, and actually threatened to shake him! Remembering that both Indians and half-breeds hate to be stared at by their acquaintances when they are ill, and often creep away into some solitary place in order to die, just as most wild and many tame animals do, I stayed no longer than was necessary to see that he and his wife had everything they required.

A week later I saw him buried at the lonely little cemetery below 'The Pines.' On that occasion more than fifty teams were tied up to the fence—a signal proof of John Marceille's popularity among his neighbours far and near. I cannot say the funeral ceremony was conducted decently and in order; for when it was time to lower the coffin, two men—carpenters by trade—had a loud and angry argument as to the proper method of letting it down into the grave.

But towards the end of the service there was a shower of rain, followed as usual by a sudden cessation of all the busy, wandering sounds in the surrounding levels of wind-blown prairie. It was as though Nature herself, having hushed the many voices of her smaller children, was standing in tears at the grave of a foster-child. The most memorable of Virgil's lines—the untranslatable 'Sunt lacrimæ rerum, et mentem mortalia tangunt'—came into my mind, and has for me henceforth a new and nearer meaning.

STEVENSON OF JUDE'S: A ROWING STORY

BY E. H. LACON-WATSON

JOHN SPENCER STEVENSON, of St. Jude's College, Cambridge, sat in his rooms one afternoon about four o'clock, feeling sick and sorry. He was a young man in whom the rival claims of intellect and muscle met pleasantly and arranged their differences on an amicable basis. Neither could assert an undue advantage, but the college would have backed him perhaps a shade more heartily for his place in the eight than in the first class of the Tripos. For his part Stevenson meant to do both—very rightly. He was seven in his college boat, and that was second on the river. Next day the May races began. It was just possible that they might go head—not very likely, according to the critics on the towpath—but the Jude's boat was good metal all through, and rumour had it that the head boat was not quite so lively as usual.

The future should have looked bright to him, but somehow it did not. A young man in good training, who had still a full year before him undisturbed by the prospect of examinations, who had rowed in the trials, and had an excellent chance of backing up the 'Varsity president—his own college stroke—in the great race next year; there were reasons enough for a cheerful outlook. He owned to himself that things might well be worse, but the next moment brought back a settled gloom. No! it could not be much worse. He saw his life ruined, and all through a moment's

folly. He fell into a brown study, with his pen pointed in the air, and wondered what on earth he should write.

He was engaged on the composition of a letter, and it was a very difficult matter. As a general rule he was rather good at

HE FELL INTO A BROWN STUDY

letter-writing, but it must be confessed that this one caused him considerable uneasiness. Three attempts had already been made, and their ruins lay in the waste-paper basket by his side, torn very small, for he did not wish Mrs. Hutt, his assiduous bed-maker, to piece them together and decipher their contents. He

was now at work on the fourth, and it did not seem that it was likely to fare much better than its predecessors. The writer sighed heavily, and began to pace up and down the room in despair. As he passed the mantelpiece he picked up a tobacco-pouch mechanically. A pipe would help him to think. He remembered with a start that racing began the next day, and smoking had been stopped for a full month. He sat down again, and kicked the table in disgust.

There was no doubt Stevenson was in a hole. His disgust was to his credit, for he was anxious, under considerable difficulties, to behave like a gentleman. The fact was, he was engaged to be married, and, reprehensible as it may seem, he wished to get out of it. Voluntarily he had bound himself down at the age of twenty years, for the term of his life—or hers. Not more than a year ago—barely a year—it had occurred only last August; and now he felt that he had been a fool. Yes! he certainly had been a fool. He was not even of age yet, and in all probability he would have to marry a girl whom he no longer loved. His life was mapped out for him, cut and dried; it was insupportable. And yet he had thought himself honestly in love last August.

How it all came back to him now: the tennis parties, the hot sun, the afternoon on the river when he made up his mind to get it over! And how empty and hollow it all seemed now! He had been spending some of the Long Vacation with the Archdales—Archdale was the name of his present boat-captain and stroke—and he had enjoyed himself immensely. He remembered the precise spot where it had taken place: at the last moment the fateful words had come almost unintentionally. She made no fuss at all; she simply made a place for him by her side, and he went over and kissed her. Even at the time he was conscious, in a dazed sort of way, that he had been rather precipitate. But he liked sitting with his arm round her waist. For a time he had really been happy enough. And she had proposed that it should be kept secret until he came of age, which seemed then to him an easy way of postponing difficulties. In another month the time would have come, and he would be bound in honour to tell his family. That was bad enough in itself; he did not know at all how the news would be received; but it was as nothing to the loss of his liberty. He longed for freedom like some imprisoned animal. For a long while he had fought against his feelings, but he felt now that he could bear it no longer. He must make a bid for release. And yet his mind revolted from the thought.

Sometimes it would come over him with a flush of glad hope

that his distaste for the bondage might be reciprocated. Perhaps she too was longing for freedom. It was a cheering thought, but he knew in his heart that it was not likely to be the case. Besides, she was not the sort of girl to consider his feelings too nicely in such a matter: she would have written long since and regretted that their engagement must come to an end. For a girl to do that sort of thing was legitimate enough, but somehow or other the world did not permit the same right to a man; or, at the best, considered such an act somewhat in the light of a meanness. It was quite right, no doubt. Stevenson himself felt that he should not care bluntly to take the whole responsibility of breaking it off. He was attempting to pursue a middle course, and give the lady a chance of retiring gracefully. Accordingly he wrote, pointing out that, according to their agreement, the day would soon be at hand for the declaration of their engagement, and asking whether she was quite sure that she was prepared to accept him for better or worse. He had, when he came of age, an income of something less than two hundred a year; she, so far as he knew, had nothing at all. If they married, it was obvious that they would not be wealthy. If they waited, it was likely that they would have to wait a long time.

He read over again what he had written. It was certainly proper enough: the only fault about it was that it did not express his sentiments. He saw only too clearly that she would read it in a totally different sense from his, that she would probably think it very right of him to offer her the opportunity of reconsidering her decision, and that she would reply effusively in the negative. And yet he could not bring himself to hint at his own defection. She should have the chance, he decided, but it would not be the act of a gentleman to go further. The bell was ringing for Hall, and he must get this load off his mind. Hastily he added a postscript, to the effect that unless he heard from her within four days he would consider her silence as equivalent to a formal renunciation of the engagement. That done, he seized his cap and gown, and ran down with his letter to the porter's lodge. A weight seemed lifted from him as he dropped it into the letter-box, and he went into Hall feeling strangely elated. For the next day or two, at all events, he could dismiss the matter from his mind.

The typical undergraduate is not accustomed to take things too seriously, and recovers his spirits quickly enough, should they ever sink below their normal level. But Stevenson was not quite the typical undergraduate: he was old for his age, and the young men of St. Jude's, fancying they detected an unnatural gravity in

SHE SIMPLY MADE A PLACE FOR HIM BY HER SIDE

his demeanour, had dubbed him 'The Ancient.' Still, a training table is not exactly a place to encourage solemnity, and when the crew adjourned to Archdale's rooms for a final glass of port and an orange, he was as lively as the rest. The talk ran chiefly on 'shop'—it generally does on such occasions; and by the time the first division boats had been severally criticised and condemned, the effect of the wine became manifest in a somewhat boisterous hilarity. Careful of his men, the captain sent them off before any harm was done, entreating them tenderly to take care of themselves for the next day. Stevenson, being his seven, and more sober-minded than the rest, was allowed to stay for a few final words. His commander was palpably nervous, not because of the morrow's racing, but because some young ladies were due at his rooms for lunch next day, and he wanted Stevenson to help entertain them. Stroke was something of a misogynist.

The fatal day arrived, and the morning hung heavily on the hands of the St. Jude's first boat. Stevenson went away after breakfast and tried to work, but he could manage no more than an hour and a half, and was forced to go out and seek sympathy from his fellows. He walked up and down the court, where he found several of the others, all suffering from the same restlessness. The morning of the first day is always the worst to bear; the imagination is lively to forecast misfortune, and the merits of the other boats are unknown and therefore formidable. Stevenson went back to his room and tried to read the paper; came out again and ran over to see a man at Trinity; back to his room for half an hour's reading. Then, to his relief, it was nearly time for lunch, and he strolled across the court to Stroke's room. There he found a table spread with the most unwholesome dainties the college kitchens could produce—salmon mayonnaise, gooseberry tart, custards. Stroke was trying his hand at making some claret-cup, which two very pretty young ladies, in most bewitching costumes, were tasting at intervals. A middle-aged and rather stout lady was watching them benignantly from a sofa by the window. Stevenson was introduced to Mrs. Walters, an aunt, her daughter, and Miss May Archdale, who was Stroke's sister. She had been away from home when Stevenson paid his visit the year before, so they had not met. Then they sat down, and the sister sat next him, and was very pleasant, and commiserated him on not being able to eat any of the nice things. His spirits rose appreciably by the time lunch was over, so effectual is a little frivolous conversation, and he was quite sorry when young Slater, who was not rowing, came to escort them down to Ditton.

Archdale and he walked to the boathouse together shortly afterwards.

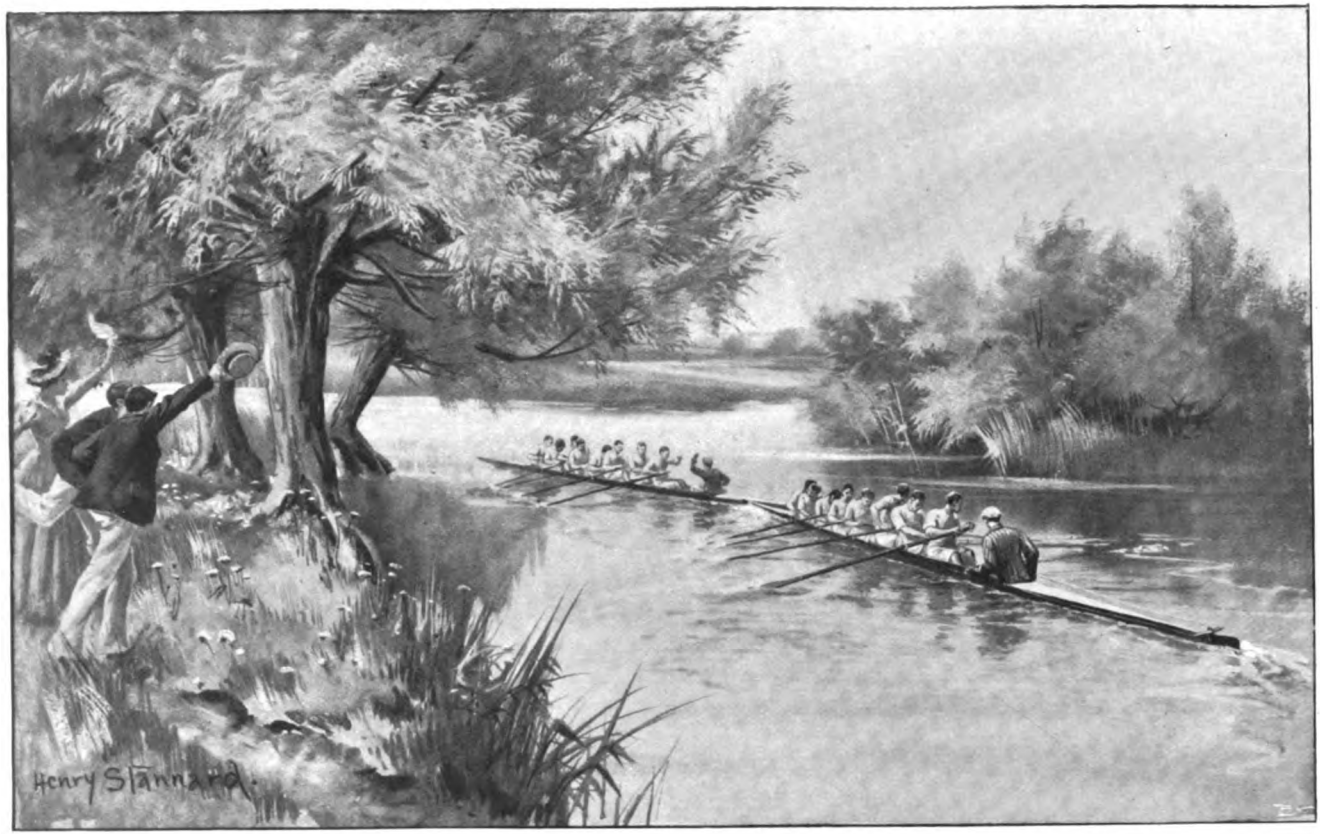
Then came the walk down the river bank, the long wait while the second division rowed down to the starting-point, and the excitement of seeing the Jude's second boat making a bump at the Willows. It was a good omen, and the men got into their shell to paddle her down with a certain elation that dispelled much of their nervousness. But the worst time is always those few minutes on the bank at Baitsbite, waiting for the word to embark. That little group of men just in front, who preserved with some difficulty an air of easy confidence, looked as if they would take some catching. Behind them there was not much to fear, perhaps, at present. Still, there was no knowing: that crew might be caught to-night, and then Jude's would have someone behind them who would make them row their hardest.

Bang! No one is ever ready for that first gun. Every man's heart beats faster. 'Now, then, four and five,' calls out the coach, and they step gingerly into their places. Hats, scarves, and sweaters are taken off and passed to the boatman on the bank, who wears a settled but rather anxious grin. 'Shove her out,' and they move silently into the stream, the little coxswain holding with his right hand the ball at the end of the chain. All down the river the long string of racing craft edge out in line. 'Touch her, bow and two,' sings out the coxswain, while the coach on the bank, an old Jude's blue who has come up to see his college head of the river again, keeps his eye anxiously on his watch. 'Get ready,' he calls. 'Ten—nine—seven,' he mutters to himself. 'Five—four—three—two—one.' 'Touch her, bow,' yells the coxswain once more, in a voice of agonised entreaty, for her head is paying off slightly towards the bank. Bow has barely time to dip his oar, when the gun is fired and they are off.

'Rotten start,' mutters the coach, as he snaps his watch and starts to run. 'Keep it long,' he shouts. 'Steady there in the bows!' The boat is rolling a bit, and two is bringing his slide up with a rush. They are at First Post Corner, and have not gained an inch—in fact, they are within their distance of the boat behind them. It does not look any too promising.

Round Grassy Corner she picks up a little, in the Plough Reach she shoots up more still; round Ditton at last, and with the Long Reach before them, there is little more than a length between the boats.

A confused roar goes up from the bank as she straightens herself for the railway bridge. Stevenson's throat is dry and parched:



THE JUDE'S SECOND BOAT MAKING A BUMP AT THE WILLOWS

every muscle seems strained to its utmost tension, and even now the boat seems to come down on his hands from time to time. If he could only get the bow side to finish their stroke out; they are clipping it again, confound them! From the bank the panting coach yells, 'Keep it long, three,' but it is doubtful whether anyone hears him. On, on they go. Will it never be over? The wielder of the fog-horn on the bank is silent; his orders are to sound when they get within a quarter-length. The rattle goes intermittently, and the crowd call, 'Well rowed, Jude's, you're gaining!'

Suddenly, at the Willows, the fog-horn sounds a joyful toot, and the roars of the crowd redouble. Jude's are going up. A quarter of a length only to pick up! Surely it must be done! Stroke quickens slightly, very slightly, at the sound, and seven backs him up manfully; but there is trouble in the bows, and the pace is not much accelerated. Heavens! what a tumult there is on the bank! The rattle is keeping up a continuous crackling; the fog-horn is working for all it is worth. They are under the railway bridge. 'Now, then, come on,' yells the coach from twenty yards behind; he is not in the best of training, and stops, fairly exhausted. Stroke hears the signal; and he, too, thinks it is time for the final effort. 'Quicken,' yells the coxswain, as Stroke says 'Now!' and up they go. As they sweep round the last bend, there is but a foot between them; Jude's are on the inside, and, trusting to luck, the coxswain leaves the rudder-lines alone. By an inch the bump is missed, and their chance is over for the day.

Sadly they disembark at the 'Pike and Eel,' and their coach, still breathless, pants up to offer advice and encouragement. 'Well rowed, you fellows,' he says; 'to-morrow you'll do it to a certainty. It was the start spoiled your chance.' And he goes aside with Stroke to talk it over. 'Three is your weak spot,' he explains; 'the rest rowed admirably—seven in particular.' Stevenson hears him and is consoled. And so, somewhat fagged but soon recovering, they join in with the ranks that escort their second boat to the boathouse, the college flag flying bravely at the head of the procession.

The next day they got a magnificent start, and made their bump just above Ditton, to the mad excitement of every member of the college. The Dean, being rather shortsighted, ran into the river in the frenzy of the moment, but was rescued unhurt, and continued to wave his hat while the black water dripped from his clothes.

The next two nights they rowed over easily.

Then came Sunday, and the second division races were over. The second boat, which had ascended four places, celebrated their triumph in a befitting manner; the first boat, with two more day before it—at that time the first division races extended over six days—went for a training walk in the country. Archdale's lady friends were still staying in Cambridge, and Stevenson and he escorted them daily over the colleges and to other places of interest. On this Sunday it fell to Stevenson's lot to escort May, Archdale walking in front with his cousin and aunt.

Somehow they had been thrown together a good deal during the last few days. It was curious, Stevenson thought, that she seemed to like his society. He was not so shy as most undergraduates, it is true, but he did not generally become so intimate with girls in so short a time. It was all very pleasant, and now that Saturday was over, and he had received no letter, the sudden freedom from all care and anxiety raised his spirits marvellously. He could not help comparing May with his (late) *fiancée*, and noting her superiority at every turn. He felt it was a little ungenerous to make comparisons, but still he was a free man now, and the thought was very delightful. He would never entrap himself again, he swore solemnly. At the same time, there was no harm in a little innocent flirtation. What a lovely sunny afternoon it was, and how sweet she looked in that dress! They leaned over Clare Bridge side by side, and looked at the water flowing underneath. Once their hands touched accidentally, and the contact sent a delicious thrill through all his veins. He was free again, free to entangle himself again, if he chose. The thought ran through him, heating his blood like wine, and then suddenly came the afterthought, and he drew away.

'I believe I am the biggest fool on earth,' he thought to himself. At the same moment Archdale and his party hove in sight, and Stevenson welcomed them with a curious blending of annoyance and relief. After all, there was no hurry. He was not in love—perish the thought!—and he did not want to be—just yet. In a few years, perhaps. He was off, dreaming of the future. There was no doubt he was an impressionable young man.

Monday came, and with it a disaster that spread a gloom darker than night over the three courts of Jude's. By some untoward accident the boat was somewhat late in getting out for the start: the coxswain was unduly flurried, and got his rudder-lines crossed, in consequence of which the boat, after a scrambling start, ran straight for Grassy Corner, and remained

there. They were bumped, and, what was worse, not by the boat they had bumped themselves on the second night, for that had gone down two more places, but by a crew little, if at all, slower than themselves, and it was extremely doubtful whether they could recover their position. Such a thing had never occurred before at the head of the first division.

The crew were savage to a man, and went about muttering dark threats against their coxswain. Even the old boatman forgot to grin, and the coach, with Archdale and Stevenson, spent the whole evening in long and anxious consultation. There was only one more day's racing, and if they could not by a supreme effort recover their position, they would have to be content with second place for a whole year. The thought was insupportable.

After dinner the men collected in Stevenson's rooms, and the coach harangued them at some length. He pointed out that to-morrow was their last chance, that each man must row his hardest, that it did not matter whether they killed themselves in the effort, for there was no more racing, and that 'By Heavens, you men, we *must* go head!' Then, as things were so critical, they had an extra glass of port each, with the promise of champagne for lunch the next day.

'Only get a good start, and you're bound to row them down,' he said at parting; but his heart was heavy within him, for he knew that they had a task before them which would tax them to the utmost.

Solemnly the Jude's crew, in all its glory of blazers and straw hats, trimmed with the college ribbon, paddled down by Ditton to the starting-point that Tuesday afternoon. The crowd cheered them lustily, but their supporters on the towpath were silent, or nearly so, for they felt nothing but a savage longing for revenge. There was little nervousness in the boat that day, for they were all imbued with the same spirit, and their minds were set upon nothing but getting the best start imaginable. They eyed the unfortunate little coxswain threateningly, intimating that if he did not keep them straight this time it would be the worse for him.

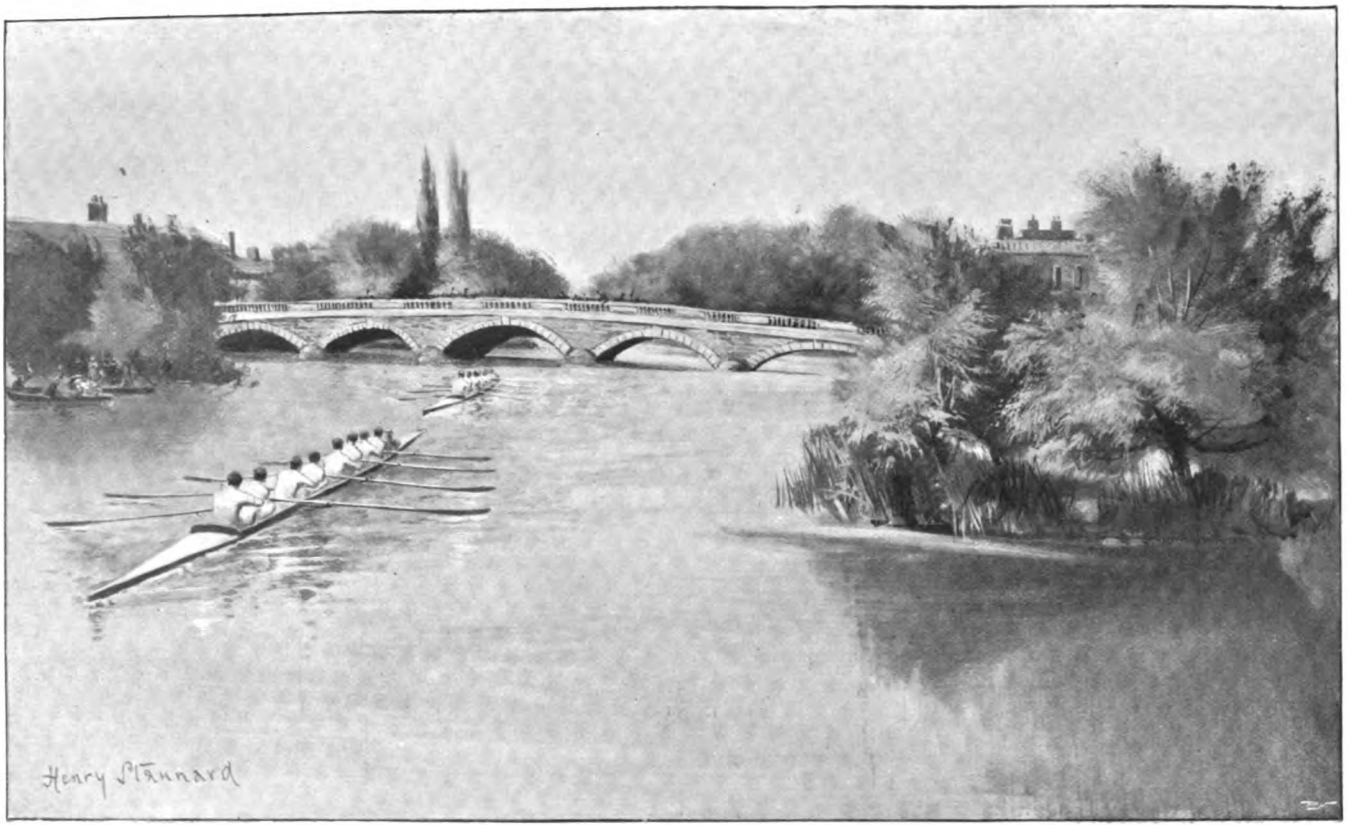
They were in their boat once more, stripped, slides forward, eyes fixed on the back of the man in front, waiting for the signal. Bow and two kept the starting chain tight enough this time, and the coxswain had to lean backwards till he was nearly out of the boat. Once more came the voices of the men on the bank, repeating in unison as the seconds went by, 'Five—four—three—two—one.'

At the same moment the chain dropped into the water, the gun fired, and the crew, like one man, drove their oars through the water for the first stroke. It was a magnificent start.

'Don't make shots; trust to rowing them down in the straight,' had been the last order of the coach, and the coxswain set himself to steer the course as though they were doing a time test. He took this time a perfect line, and slowly the boat gained, every man rowing splendidly. But could the pace last? The rate of stroke was higher than they had ever started with before—not much, perhaps, but sufficiently so to find out any weak spots—and the boat in front was rowing beautifully together, not in the least flurried. Jude's must have gained more than a length at the Plough, but they were rowing the faster stroke, and none knew that better than their opponents' captain, who smiled to himself grimly as he rounded Ditton, and had no intention of being caught napping. The roar of Ditton sounds faintly to Stevenson's ears; there is a kind of humming in his brain; but he sets his teeth, and prefers not to wonder whether he can last the course. He, at least, will row till he drops.

They are in the Long Reach—at the Willows—and still there is no sign from the bank, except the confused tumult of shouts. If they are to catch them at all, surely they ought to quicken at once. Stroke apparently thinks so. Fifty yards below the railway bridge he calls out 'Now,' and quickens. A sort of strangled repetition of the word passes up the boat; one or two call 'Right,' with thin and weakened voices, and up they go, the blades flying faster and faster, until they are rowing forty-two to the minute. The boat springs forward, but a head wind has risen, and the spray flies freely from the bow oars. Still, they have gained; the leading boat felt that gust as well, and are growing a trifle unsteady. As they shoot the bridge, the fog-horn sounds at last, and seems to put new life into the crew. 'Yoicks!' cries someone in the bows. Archdale struggles like a demon, and Stevenson responds with a last despairing effort. The roar on the bank swells to a mad tumult. Suddenly a tremor runs through the boat; bow has stopped rowing; it is all over; and Stevenson sinks exhausted over his oar in a dead faint as they drift slowly towards the bank, victors and vanquished together, rowed out to the last man. Thus did Jude's regain their lost position.

They had to lift Stevenson out of the boat, and take him back to college in a cab. He had broken down a little, the doctor said; probably had been overworking himself in mind as well as body. It was not everyone who could combine Tripos work with



AS THEY SHOOT THE BRIDGE, THE FOGHORN SOUNDS AT LAST

rowing. For the present he had better go to bed, and take a complete rest for two or three days. Then he would no doubt be quite well again. So Stevenson remained in bed for a couple of days, enjoying the laziness thoroughly; for there are occasions when it is pleasant enough to pose as an invalid. He was the hero of the college, and, from the senior tutor downwards, had no lack of visitors. The Dean, that enthusiast who had taken an involuntary header on the night of the first bump, made himself particularly pleasant.

The third day Stevenson felt it would be a crime to pretend illness any longer. Besides, Archdale had promised to bring his sister in for tea; it was surprising, he said, what an interest all the ladies took in No. 7 of the Jude's boat. They had talked of nothing else at the ball in the Guildhall last night. So Stevenson got up, feeling not much amiss, and gave orders to Mrs. Hutt to prepare a tea regardless of expense. Then he thought he would try a cigarette. Looking for the box, his eye fell on a letter, lying upon the mantelpiece, that had evidently been mislaid. It was unopened. He turned it over, and saw it was—from her. It was dated Monday; probably it had arrived on the afternoon of the last race.

Suddenly all the light faded from the room, and he saw the world grey and desolate. It seemed doubly hard now that he had fancied himself free. Well, the matter must be faced out, then. Stevenson sighed, and began to read. He knew very well what she would say, and he was not deceived. The letter was very forgiving, even effusively so. Miss Douglas had been away for a week, and she was tearfully anxious lest her silence should have caused any anxiety. Of course she would keep to her word. She knew women were expected to be fickle, but she had hoped to have made a better impression, and so on, and so on; only perhaps it would be better, as they were both so young, for the engagement to be kept secret for one more year.

And so ended his little dream of happiness. And Archdale and May were coming to tea at four! He did not much care; everything was much the same to him now. He would make an effort, and take it smiling. They would be up in half an hour or so. Somebody was coming upstairs already.

It was Archdale, and he looked perturbed, as one who bore bad news. He greeted Stevenson with a rather forced hilarity, but seemed uneasy, and eyed him with something like apprehension. At last, after talking of indifferent subjects for some time, he spoke out:

'Look here, old chap, I've just heard something which you may not quite like. I don't know if I ought to tell you now, but I think you ought to know at once. And, after all, there may be nothing in it.'

'I think I can stand most things just now,' said Stevenson, a little wearily.

'Well, it's no good beating about the bush. You know when you were staying with us last year, I thought somehow you were rather keen on that girl that was paying us a visit—Miss Douglas—you remember?'

Stevenson blushed a fiery red, but said nothing. The other went on still more uncomfortably.

'Well, the fact is, I heard to-day that she's engaged to that little cad Barnes, who came into a fortune last year.' He said no more, for Stevenson jumped up with a wild shout that certainly showed no trace of weakness, and promptly rolled his captain on the floor. 'So you thought I was in love, did you?' he cried aloud. Then he laughed, rather insanely, and danced round the room. He stopped abruptly. 'Isn't your sister coming up to tea?' he inquired, with a touch of anxiety.

'Oh, yes, she's coming right enough,' replied Archdale. 'She thought you ought to know about it, that's all.'

CROSS-COUNTRY RUNNING

BY R. R. CONWAY

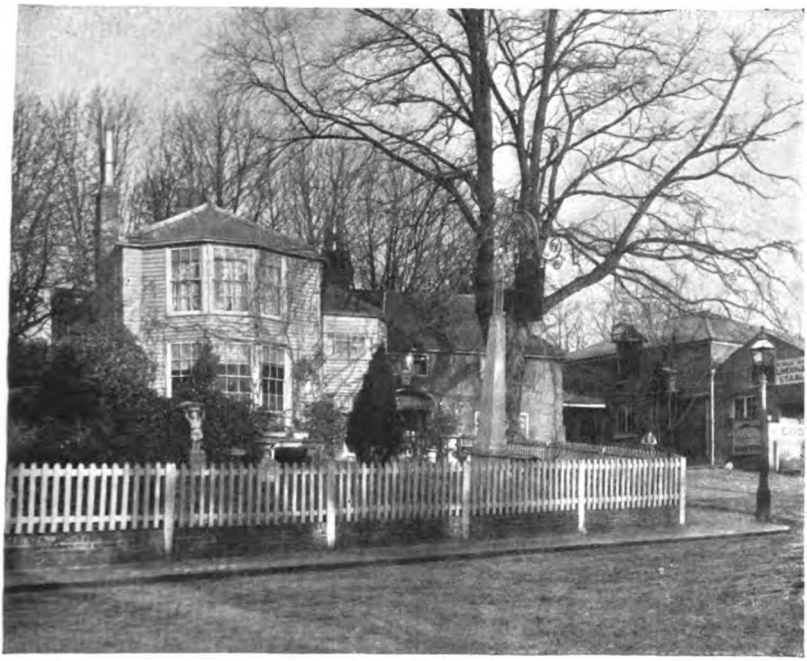
CROSS-COUNTRY running is essentially the sport of the masses. The classes either pass it contemptuously by on the other side, or judge its votaries by the attenuated and lightly clad specimens of humanity who may be seen scampering round suburban roads in the gathering darkness of a winter Saturday afternoon. But we cannot help regarding it as a most important branch of athletics. Nearly all our best distance runners train regularly across country in the off season, and while our sprinters go down before the flying Americans, and our jumpers are outdone by the nimble Gael, we can still claim an undisputed supremacy at the longer distances, and it is across country that the majority of such contests are decided. A late prominent paper-chaser, at Cambridge, has rather happily described the sport as 'a man running as nature made him,' for the description is just. Nowhere will you see such absolutely natural style (much of it I regret to say bad) as at the end of a long and punishing cross-country race. In many cases it is simply a man's own pluck and strength that carry him home, and it is only in very exceptional cases that we see a pure stylist shine 'over grass and plough.' But of this more anon.

The origin of the sport is, of course, to be traced to the old game of Hare and Hounds, more particularly as followed at Rugby; I do not think I am far wrong in stating that in the historical chapter in 'Tom Brown,' wherein Tom, East, and the 'Tadpole' finish up an afternoon of misadventure on the roof of the 'Pig and Whistle,' we have the chief inspiration of our sport.

Before the days of universal football and golf there was very little for a man who had not means for hunting and shooting to do during the winter, and just thirty years ago the first cross-country club sprang into being. Mr. Walter Rye, the father of paper-chasers, aided by a few kindred spirits, formed the Thames Hare and Hounds Club, which still lives and flourishes; though in an age of innovation it stands firm to its traditions, and resists the allurements of 'Associations' and 'Championships.' The old Thames can look back with pride to a glorious past; it was the first to hold the championship, which it so largely assisted to found, and held it till it could not hope to cope successfully with the brawny sons of toil who were to be found in the ranks of the big provincial clubs. In 1896, however, the club was concerned in the first Inter-'Varsity race, successfully decided over neutral ground, and the thanks of both University teams were deservedly tendered to all the officials, whose efforts left absolutely nothing undone. The Thames certainly possess the most genuine and sporting course near London, and the finish over Wimbledon Common cannot be surpassed. The reins of government have been ably held for some seasons by a succession of brothers Rye, who tread worthily in the steps of their illustrious progenitor. No mention of the Thames would be complete without an allusion to that marvellous runner P. H. Stenning. In his prime, no course was too long for him, no plough too stiff, and no night too dark. He was head and shoulders above his rivals twenty years ago, but unfortunately, for many reasons, it is impossible to obtain a line between him and the cracks of to-day. His sad death a few years since was most sincerely regretted.

Next in order of seniority come the Blackheath Harriers, who sprang into being in 1869, under the title of the Peckham Amateurs. Their parent was, and is, Mr. Fred H. Reed, who is a model president. No club is more patriotic than the 'Blackheathens;' the enthusiasm of their officials is only equalled by that of all their members. Their headquarters are palatial, and their present secretary a marvel of energy.

The other metropolitan club which calls for special notice is the South London Harriers, both on account of its age and its record. The S. L. H. preserves its youth in a wonderful manner, and encounters its friends from Blackheath in every imaginable sport. It must not be forgotten that the big cross-country clubs do great service to the cause of athletics generally, and the sports held under their direction rank among the biggest events of the year. All through the summer they encourage



THE HOME OF PAPER-CHASING. THE 'KING'S HEAD,' ROEHAMPTON, HEADQUARTERS OF THE THAMES HARE AND HOUNDS

athletics among their members, and are now making a great feature of swimming, for which they deserve unstinted praise.

Cross-country sport is controlled by Associations—namely, the Northern, Midland, and Southern Counties—which each hold their district championships in addition to the 'National,' which takes place alternately in the north, midlands, and London. Last year, however, owing to an unfortunate dispute, the National fell through, the Southern Counties finding themselves unable to take part in the race. A so-called championship fell rather flat, the only item of interest being the fine running of S. J. Robinson, of

Northampton. It is gratifying to state that this year the National has been renewed with a second win for Robinson.

The list of past cross-country champions contains the names of many who gained even greater fame on the cinder path. W. G. George, W. Snook, and J. Kibblewhite proved themselves invincible at all distances, from one mile upwards, and form an irresistible answer to those who hold that cross-country running ruins a man for pace and style on the path. Let me here quote two instances in point. On March 1, 1884, George won the 'National;' on the 15th he ran at Cambridge for the Blackheath Harriers (never shall I forget my own puny efforts to hold the champion in the last mile!); on April 7 he broke all amateur records for ten miles at Stamford Bridge. He had in the meantime amused himself over shorter distances with his usual success. In February and March 1897 C. S. Sydenham ran the following series of races:

Feb.	13.—Ranelagh Harriers ten miles steeplechase . . .	1st
„	20.—Southern Counties Championship, ten miles . . .	4th
Mar.	6.—Inter-County Championship, ten miles	1st
„	13.—L.A.C. *v.* C.U.A.C., three miles (in 14 min. 56 secs.) .	1st

About three weeks later he ran a 4·26 mile! The clubs who have won most fame in the 'National' are the Moseley Harriers (winners 1881–2–3–4), the Birchfield (six wins), and the Salford (five wins), the only Southern team to achieve success since 1879 having been the Essex Beagles. The fact is that the Birmingham and Manchester clubs seem to have possessed peculiarly magnetic attractions for the leading provincial runners.

The race *par excellence* of the year in the eyes of all metropolitan athletes is the 'Southern Counties,' at present decided over a terribly stiff course round the Watkin Tower at Wembley. Since 1884, when J. B. Foreman led the S. L. H. to their Austerlitz, the champion clubs and runners have represented the cream of our Southern long-distance runners. Such names as Carter, Coad, Thomas, Kibblewhite, H. A. Heath, Watkins, George Martin and C. Bennett form a perfect galaxy of talent, and in my opinion the greatest of them all is Heath. Many good judges consider him the best cross-country runner that ever put on a shoe. There is also a so-called 'Junior' Championship among the junior clubs. This event attracts enormous fields, and produces runners capable of holding their own with the best of the seniors. Both contests are decided simultaneously by a miracle of organisation, the leading 'junior' often following hard

MODERN PAPER-CHASING. THE START FOR THE CHAMPIONSHIP

on the flagging steps of the last 'senior.' The juniors are sent on their way when the seniors have finished half the course. Last year 289 in all competed, and without the slightest hitch—a result due entirely to the secretary of the association, Mr. Arthur Cook, without mention of whom no account of contemporary cross-country running would be complete.

The clubs which have attained the proud position of Southern Champions may be counted on the fingers of one hand. They are the S.L.H. (three wins), Finchley (seven wins), the Essex Beagles (three wins), and the Spartans (two).

The sport has not, perhaps, enjoyed the popularity at the Universities that it might have done, but there have been many formidable obstacles in the way, chiefly, of course, the fact that at Oxford and Cambridge the athletic season occupies the winter months. A man who has a good prospect of gaining his Blue at either of the long-distance events on the path cannot fairly be expected to imperil his limbs across country in the Lent Term, though I cannot too strongly state my conviction that nothing but good can result from a course of cross-country work in the autumn. Last spring (1897) at Cambridge the only men who showed themselves capable of running three miles at anything like racing pace, with the exception of W. V. Wood, late president of the C.U.A.C., a runner quite above the average, were the regular cross-country men. This year another cross-country man has come to the front—namely, A. Hunter, who won the mile in 4·26.

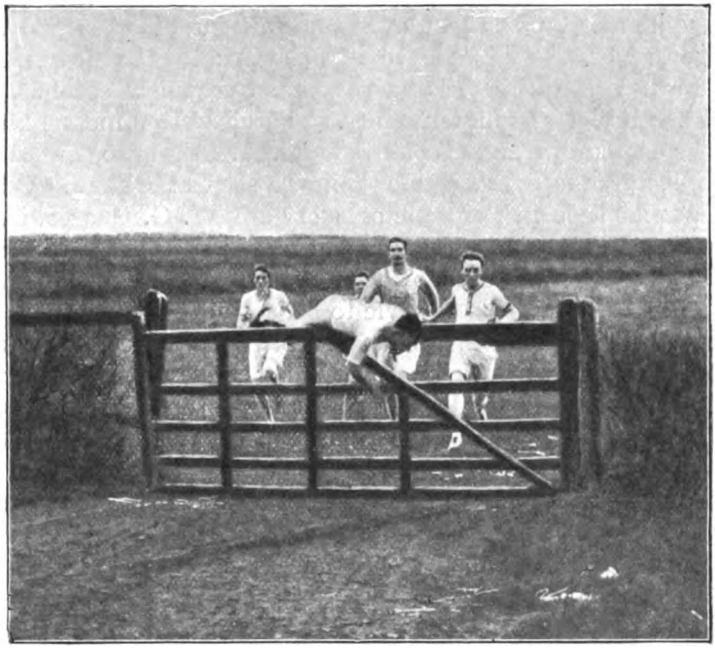
The first race between the University clubs took place at Oxford in 1880, and the event has since that time been annual. Oxford were the first winners, the trail, according to the match book of the C.U.H. and H., having been tampered with by malicious boys. Cambridge then entered on a sequence of seven victories, to be followed by three for Oxford. Then in 1891 a very strong Cambridge team romped home; but the next three years witnessed disaster, the race of 1894 being a crushing disappointment, as we at Cambridge fondly deemed ourselves invincible. The last three seasons, however, have brought consolation, the Cambridge teams being of quite exceptional merit. The record thus stands at eleven to seven in favour of Cambridge. Up to 1890 the race was decided alternately over the Oxford and Cambridge courses. This plan, though certainly conducive to subsequent post-prandial hilarity, was for many obvious reasons unsatisfactory. Accordingly, thanks to the Thames H. and H., an attempt was made at a neutral course, but the result

was failure. Both teams missed their way at an awkward turn, and the race was re-run at Oxford. The old order of things was then renewed till December 1896, when the Thames once more made the attempt, and this time triumphantly. The race will henceforth doubtless take place over neutral ground, as is only fit and proper.

The constitution of the two University clubs is very different. The O.U.H. and H. are affiliated to the O.U.A.C., which makes them a grant towards their expenses, and exercises generally a parental supervision. Cambridge, however, rest on an entirely independent footing, and rank with the various other clubs which are entitled to the 'Half Blue.' The club at the present time rejoices in solvency, and is growing yearly in numbers and prestige. Both Universities encounter several of the London clubs, and from the results of these matches select their five champions who take part in the great race in December. Each side has been fortunate in its representatives; and, without drawing the proverbially odious comparison, I may be allowed to congratulate Oxford on having claimed the Rev. W. Pollock-Hill and W. Whitelaw, and my own club on L. W. Reed, T. Colbatch-Clark, W. F. Copeland, C. C. Angell, and that marvel of consistency W. W. Gibberd, to whom I can give no higher title than that of 'the Cambridge Whitelaw.'

When we consider the sport itself, the reason of its popularity, especially in the metropolitan district, is not hard to find. The cost is trifling, the outfit of the simplest, and it can be pursued at an hour which would render any other outdoor sports impossible. It is difficult to overestimate such advantages to the average Londoner who cannot call his time his own. There is no more delightful sensation than that of a good stretch over a sporting course, when wind and limb alike are in good condition, and one can stride out right through from end to end. Much senseless rubbish has been talked about the dangers of cross-country running; but these are incurred only by the foolish. In the first place, let no one make the attempt who is not *absolutely sound*. A collapse which, on the running-path within reach of the friendly pavilion, is trifling, becomes a very different matter five miles from anywhere, in a strange country, and with the nearest man's back fast vanishing through the gloom. Never shall I forget the unpleasant sensation of hunting for a lost Blackheathen in the November blizzard of 1893, when every turnip seemed to take the shape of a senseless corpse! The gentleman in question still lives, however, and blesses the name of the eminent physiologist against whose

hospitable door he stumbled. Secondly, I must strongly advise all beginners to wear jerseys and shorts of sufficient thickness. Silk and gauze, which is all very well in the summer, gives very scant protection when the temperature nears the twenties, and the slight increase of weight is amply compensated by the security from chill and cramp. A great safeguard, too, comes from the use of woollen gloves and mittens protecting the wrist and forearm. These should be always worn on a really cold day. The only proper shoes are those made for the purpose by the



THE CAMBRIDGE TEAM TRAINING
GATE PRACTICE. W. W. GIBBERD 'SWINGING OVER'

leading makers. They should be provided with a *broad* heel-strap, very low heels, and a steel plate protecting the foot from the jar of a spiked sole on a hard road. The one thing to do is to pay a good price to a good maker, and that will be found the truest economy.

The best training for cross-country running consists of lots of walking, steady work over the most varied country to be found, and once a week a good fast spin on the cinder path. This is absolutely necessary to a team that means to shine in a punishing race; practice on the path gives just the right amount of dash

and finish to carry one home in the last mile. During the last fortnight of training once a week across country is all that should be attempted.

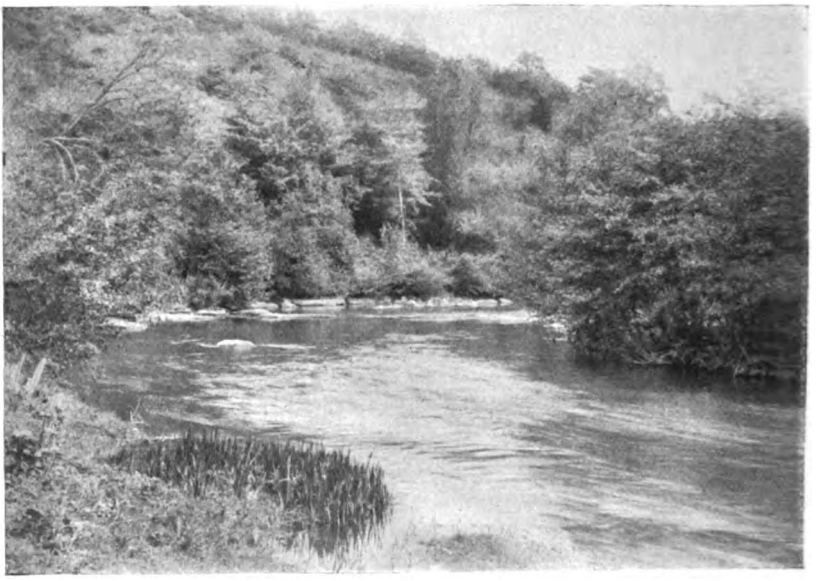
As regards style, men run well across country in all shapes and sizes. While in a race on the track between picked men one general principle seems to inspire them all, in the 'illegitimate sport' the case is very different. The reason is to be found in the varying nature of the ground covered. While A rejoices in the strength which carries him through the mud, and revels in the most sticky and holding plough, B is a natural stylist, a pretty jumper, and a flyer over the portions of grass and road which are beneficently placed in his way; thanks, however, to the variety of a representative course very few seconds will separate the rivals in ten miles. Perhaps the most finished runner ever known across country is Dr. H. A. Munro, whose true form, luckily for Cambridge, was never seen at Oxford. Others I might mention in the same category are W. G. George, in the palmy days of his amateurism; S. Thomas; and C. S. Sydenham, who displays a perfect combination of strength and grace. There is no hard and fast rule of style to be laid down; every man will find his own favourite method of 'negotiating' varied agricultural difficulties. As regards jumping, great care must be exercised. A nasty jar or trip will often spoil a man's chances, and while 'illigant leppin'' brings down the gallery, it seldom proves a paying investment.

To my mind the great charm of cross-country running as a *sport* lies in the fact that in all the leading contests a man finds himself one of a team, and contending, not for his own hand, but for the honour and glory of his club. The method of scoring in inter-club matches is simply this: the respective places of the runners are added together, and the team with the smallest total wins. Combination therefore forms the most important feature in the prospects of a team. A most striking instance of this is to be found in the fact that on one occasion the Finchley Harriers carried off the championship of the South when their leading man was not even in the first ten; but they all finished in a body, a sight to rejoice the hearts of their enthusiastic supporters. The members of a team must recollect that it is the duty of every one to help on his colleagues and run as 'solid' as possible, the advantage of timely encouragement and judicious pacing to the weaker vessels being simply incalculable.

On the other hand it often happens that a real flyer is too

good for his team. He sails away in the van, quite ignoring the fact that his comrades are toiling along some half-mile or so behind him, and that he would be doing far more good to his club by occupying a humbler position. But there is one serious disadvantage to this system; many clubs in their natural anxiety to strengthen their forces resort to the most unblushing importation, and stoop to devices which would do credit to the most expert organiser of a League Football Club. The officers of the various associations deserve all credit for their efforts to stamp out this evil; but it exists, and I fear will continue to do so. While on the subject of abuses there is another point which strikes the true lover of the sport. There is far too much pot-hunting. Nearly every club publishes an imposing list of handicaps over every imaginable distance, some of them being only by the wildest stretch of imagination 'cross-country.' What we want is more genuine paper-chasing of the old style. The present generation has lost the art of hunting out a trail, and many prominent runners have in all probability never crossed a genuine line of country in their lives. There should be more real inter-club matches. No keener and better races are to be seen anywhere than such contests as the Inter-'Varsity race or the annual fight between Blackheath and South London for the 'Nicholls Cup.' The inter-county race is a splendid idea in theory, provided that it is not too much eclipsed in importance by the championships.

There is one last word to be said, and I wish it could be omitted, but in any essay dealing with the sport it is impossible to avoid admitting the fact that among its followers there are far too many 'wrong 'uns.' Let it be distinctly understood that I do not breathe one word of objection to the social standing of a great number of *fin-de-siècle* athletes. If a man runs straight, keeps himself respectable, and is a sportsman, no one ought to mind meeting him; but these ideal creatures are not as frequently met with as one could wish. We cannot blind ourselves to the fact that many of our present amateurs are only kept from open professionalism by the fact that they can make a better thing out of it by remaining as they are. Let clubs resolve to do away with their lavish distribution of prizes, and a change for the better will be sure to come.



'TWIXT TROUT AND GRAYLING: A STUDY ON THE MONNOW

BY C. PARKINSON

A FINE October is the most glorious season on the Monnow from an angler's point of view. Great hills afford ample shelter in the narrow valleys through which the river flows, and the superb autumn tints in favourable years last well into November—a blaze of crimson and gold. I have in my mind a beautiful fresh grayling leaping in the final death-throes upon a mossy bank, after a smart battle in the stream. It turned the scales at 1 lb. 6 oz.—a big fish for the Monnow, where its kind were non-existent twenty years ago. Some of the characteristics of the grayling are very striking. Note the rosy blush which rapidly fades away from the still living fish; it might be the faint reflection from some alpine-glow rather than a direct emanation from the silvery scales. The overlapping of the same hexagonal scales produces a peculiar optical delusion, *i.e.* the grey lines from which this member of the Salmonidæ is said to take its name. The triangular pupil of the eye is also very remarkable, whilst the abnormally large dorsal fin with irregular bars of red

and black is curiously attractive. The fragrance of the newly captured fish, to my mind, resembles cucumber rather than the thyme from which the specific name is derived. An examination of the internal economy shows a large swim-bladder suitably adapted for rising or sinking in the deep pools that a grayling loves.

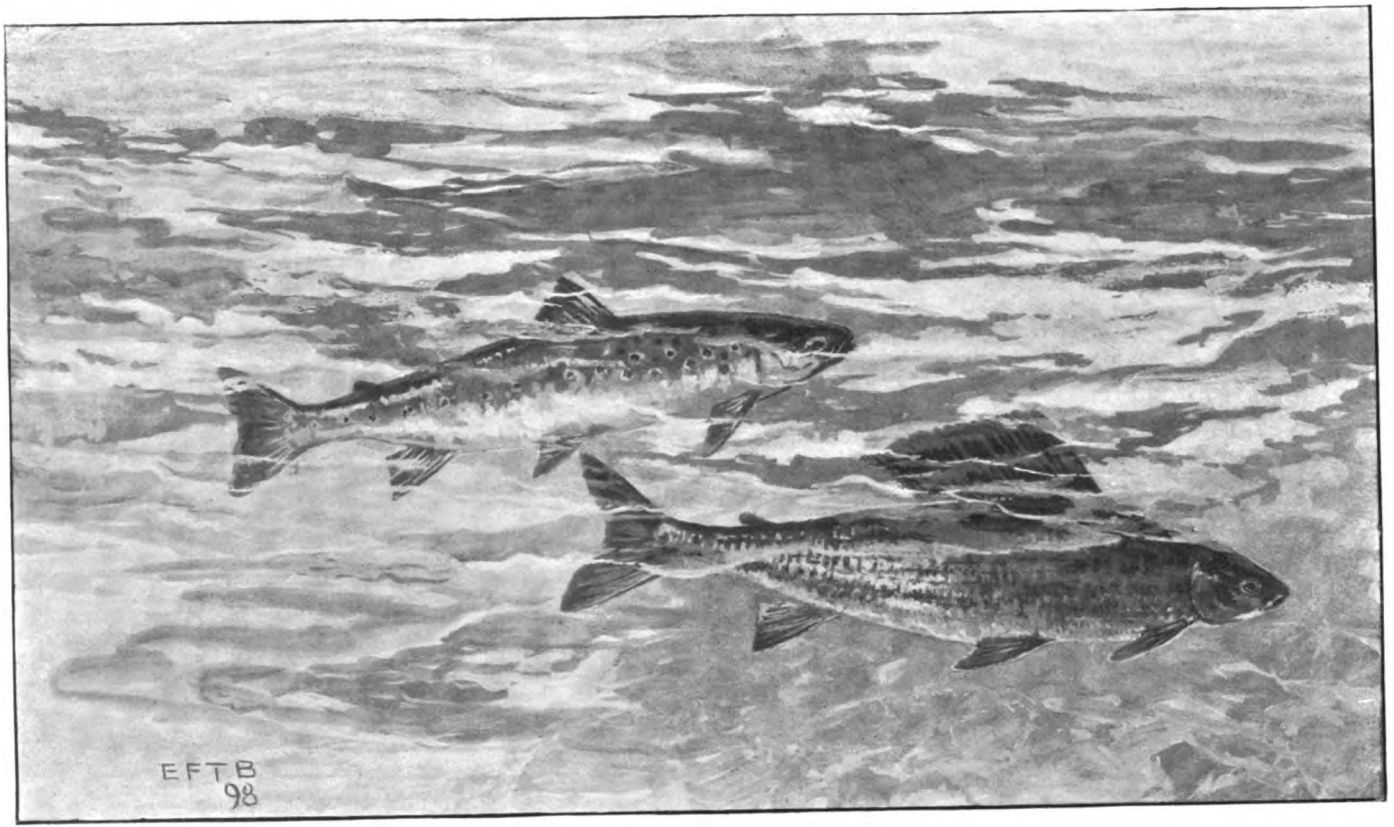
Who can say that this handsome fish is not indigenous in some of our northern streams? In days gone by, when pisciculture and the artificial breeding of fish were arts little known, it would seem somewhat impracticable for the Cistercian monks to have conveyed the living grayling from French waters to English rivers; and yet this is very generally said to have been the case. Certain it is, however, that the Monnow knew not grayling until the advent of the present generation. One of the riparian owners for his own edification introduced a few fish by way of experiment, the result being that within a few years they spread with great rapidity into the lower waters; and now the river, swarming with fish, ranks as a first-class grayling stream.

At first sight the sudden incursion of grayling might be reckoned prejudicial to the trout fishing, but it has not proved so, and there appear valid reasons why the one species should not materially interfere with the other. Let it be at once granted that big fish—either of the one kind or the other—feed voraciously on the young fry without discrimination. On the whole, anglers may be trusted to prevent any great accumulation of really big fish; they pursue their prey diligently and—for the most part—well. The all-important breeding seasons and habits of the two supposed enemies are altogether different. Few trout, I imagine, breed in the Monnow at all; the female runs up into tributary brooklets in the late autumn to deposit her spawn on the soft muddy bottom, where the ova are duly impregnated by the male fish, and the baby trout develop in the early spring beneath the shelter of friendly weeds. In such places the grayling never penetrates; it is the herons which are the uncompromising enemies of the young brook trout. I know such a natural fish-nursery which is little more than a ditch through the red marl; it communicates directly with the Monnow, and as late as April I have seen hundreds of troutlets—about an inch in length—frightened away from such a mud bank by my passing shadow into the security of a thick entanglement of floating weed. The fry remain in the smaller brook until they are sufficiently developed to face the rougher conditions of river life. It is the number of

similar natural breeding establishments so favourably placed in relation to the river that constitutes the safeguard of the Monnow trout supply; on the other hand, in the dark wintry nights, many a fat trout is quietly tickled by poaching hands to its destruction in the same brooks.

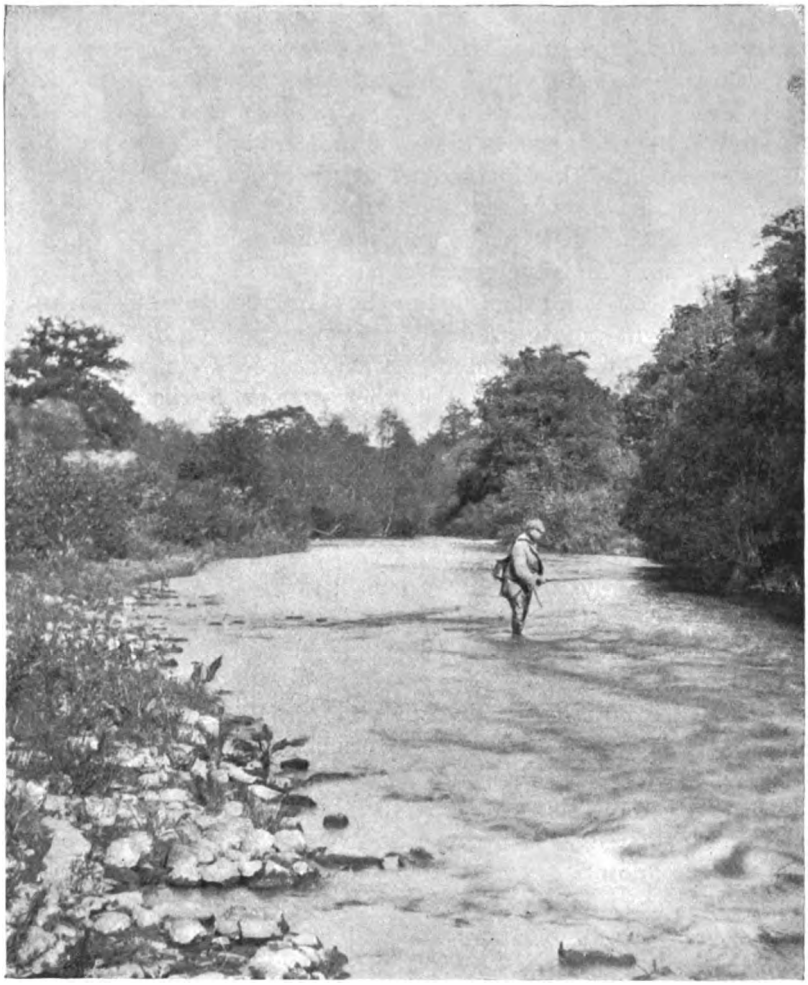
The grayling have altogether different breeding-places and habits. The ova are deposited among the gravel and clean sands of the main stream during the late spring. All through summer the fish is out of season, and the trouble now seems to be, how to avoid the rising grayling even when May-fly is on the Monnow and the trout are most greedy. So far as the destruction of the very young fish is concerned, the probabilities are more in favour of the patriarchal trout eating the grayling than *vice versâ*. If the time should ever arrive when the river became overstocked, disease, in the shape of the dreaded *Saprolegnia ferax*, would soon proclaim the fact. In another western river—the Teme—I have found grayling thus afflicted, the circular patches behind the pectoral fins having something the appearance of so-called ringworm on a child's head.

The Monnow is a fitful stream rising in the Black Mountains on the borders of Monmouthshire and Wales. The spring-sources above the village of Longtown are delightfully situated, the water leaping in miniature cascades from the very ribs of the old red sandstones. A sort of half-way plateau flanks the hills some 300 feet above the valley, where the short turf forms a natural roadway underneath the higher ridges. Here the Welsh cattle and mountain sheep graze at their own sweet will, heads being suddenly uplifted from amid the tall bracken as an intrusive stranger passes along. The precipitous escarpment of rock flanks the one side, covered in moist places by a profuse vegetation of mosses, liverworts, and ferns. Rivulets descend from hidden clefts into clear pools which are so many exquisite natural grottoes. These fairy-like crevices are in reality the spring-sources of the Monnow, which slowly gathers force amid the valley pastures until its volume is farther swelled at Pandy—a well-known angling resort—by the waters of the sparkling Honddhu (the Blackwaters) descending on the opposite side of the mountain range from Llanthony, with its beautiful abbey ruin. For some thirty miles the Monnow continues its circuitous course through wild scenery *viâ* Pontrilas, Grosmont, and Skenfrith, to its junction with the Wye at Monmouth (or Monnow mouth). In some parts the water dashes merrily over rocks and boulders with ideal streams and pools to gratify the angler's wants. The



TWIXT TROUT AND GRAYLING

steep red banks are literally clothed with hanging woods in some hidden reaches of the river. Or, again, the country expands into verdant pasture lands irrigated by the calmly flowing river. It is deeper in these parts, with stretches of apparently dead water.



WADING IN MID-STREAM

The fisherman haunts the wilder scenes, where he can wade in solitude beneath the spreading alders in water absolutely inaccessible from either bank. Wading in mid-stream is a necessity on the Monnow, except in a few exceptionally open places. Even when there is no baffling wind, it requires a practised hand to

throw a fly successfully in these wilder parts where trees and bushes innumerable overhang.

I well remember one who has since become expert with the fly-rod making his maiden effort in a particularly difficult reach of the Monnow, near to Skenfrith. Even a man of genial disposition is apt to have his temper ruffled by the *contretemps* liable to occur at such a time, whilst unsympathetic friends (fiends, he said) jeer in derision at his frantic efforts to clear a sufficient length of line. Who can fail to appreciate the feelings of a fisherman when his cast is securely hung up among the branches behind far above his reach, just at the psychological moment when a hungry trout rises in the most business-like and determined manner? All this happened—and more—upon the day that I recall. The final catastrophe was only reached when a wicked puff of wind seized the flies precisely as our budding piscator sought to throw deftly across a pool with rising fish. Alas! 'L'homme propose, mais Dieu dispose.' Avoiding all the bushes with considerable skill, the dropper fly became firmly hooked in the middle of his own back! The scene was really impressive, as with every frantic effort the hook became more firmly embedded in his coat, and the water seethed again at the language our usually sober friend employed. The greater his contortions, the more hilarious the laughter from the bank. There is certainly a consolation in the misfortunes of others. But the victim has graduated in the art of fly-fishing since those days; he can now throw a decent length in most respectable angling company.

Skenfrith, situated about eight miles from any railway station, is a perfect angling resort. The bridge across the Monnow at the top of the village must be familiar to many a fisherman, and there is a comfortable inn close by the waterside. The ruins of the old border castle stand near the river, together with a quaint church remarkable for the tracery of some of the Early English windows and the peculiar square tower. The bold hills of Coedangred rise immediately behind the inn, and the beautiful woods of Glen Monnow clothe the opposite slopes. Nothing can be more delightful than to throw your window open in the early morning, when fresh dew sparkles on every blade of grass and the thrushes and blackbirds begin their magnificent chorus of song. This is the time to nip into your waders—while slothful ones sleep—and, with scant regard to toilette, to slip into the turmoil of the stream below the weir that is placed diagonally across the river. Fat trout always lurk in the tail of the rushing

waters, and it is hard lines if your alder, blue dun, or red spinner does not lure a dishful of fresh trout to destruction before the breakfast hour. The lazy ones reproach you for being a selfish beast while they eat the fish with perfect affability.

The natural history of the genus fisherman has yet to be written; it possesses idiosyncrasies of its own which can hardly be judged by any known standard of morals. Garway Weir lies a mile or two above Skenfrith, and is one of the most cherished pieces of water. See the manner in which two of the fastest friends will exercise every subtlety in discussing the plan of action for the day, in order to circumvent each other and to gain

SKENFRITH BRIDGE AND CASTLE

the monopoly of fishing this choice water. It is a study to listen to their discourse. Each has Garway Weir firmly fixed in his own mind as the inevitable goal. The one announces his intention of going in the opposite direction, whilst the other thinks the wind favourable for the upper waters; both agree nothing can be done at Garway in the glare of the sun. They start on their separate pathways, and, behold! in an hour's time the one that is least nimble on his legs reaches Garway Weir to find his beloved companion calmly fishing in the very water mentally reserved for himself. This goes on year after year, and still the polite fiction is steadily maintained. I believe it to be a libel and

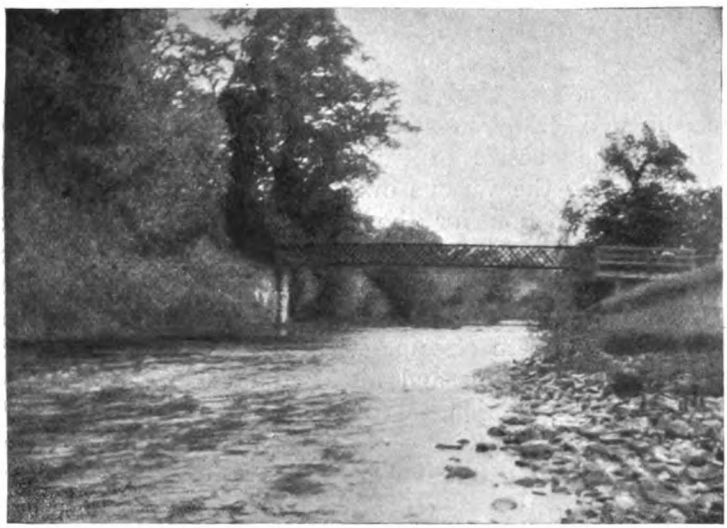
a gross misrepresentation to say that fishermen lie; they tell self-deceptions, and by some occult mental process establish a belief in their own unimpeachable veracity.

It is hard to convey any impression of the quiet beauty of the Monnow. The picture of a sudden bend, where the stream ripples vivaciously over the stony bed and the steep banks are clad with splendid woods right to the water's edge, serves to represent one of many ideal reaches of the western river known to few beyond the angling fraternity. Some eight miles above Skenfrith, Grosmont Castle, another of the ancient strongholds, commands

THE WEIR

the river from the steepest of hills. There is some first-rate grayling water between this part and the iron footbridge across the Monnow below Pontrilas, where, as the autumn advances, a couple of rods may reasonably bag their dozen brace a day each; that is, when the fickle fish choose to rise at all. Such flies as the whirling blue, iron blue, and the like, are usually in request; but there is a yellow-bodied kind of dun on the water in October that might well have its artificial counterfeit. Like all the Monnow, the Grosmont waters are strictly preserved, and it is only the fortunate few who exercise the right to take their pastime therein. The condition of the river is always difficult to anticipate, for whilst it is never clear in the sense that chalk

streams are clear, it is liable, after the manner of all mountain streams, to most sudden fluctuations in level. A very few hours' heavy rain in the hills serves to flood the lower reaches so far as fishing is concerned; the stream fines down again just as rapidly as it has risen. The 'compleat angler' knows his simple requirements. The water must not be too high or too low; just sufficient colour on it is a *sine quâ non*. At these rare moments the fisherman goes forth, if he can contrive to be on the spot, 'at peace with all the world and the women-folk likewise,' as Artemus Ward puts it. But the Monnow has sheltered valleys, even when the elements are less favourably disposed, and blank days are somewhat rare.



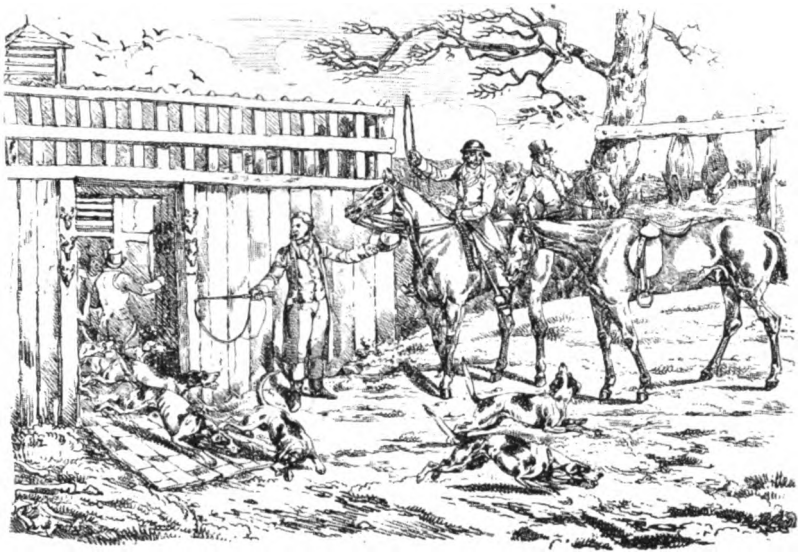
PONTRILAS

In the neighbourhood of Pandy the surroundings are very charming. The peaks of the Sugar Loaf, near Abergavenny, and the Great Skerrid or Holy Mountain, are sometimes visible, and a spur of the Black Mountains flanks the Monnow valley. A track across the hills leads to Llanthony, a splendid walk for those having the inclination for a climb. The moors are the most southerly limit for the breeding of red grouse, which find a congenial haunt amongst the purple heathers, bilberry, and endless covert. Curlews, plovers, and many other birds dwell among the hill pastures, where a human being is seldom seen. The greater part of the rural population from these valleys has long since migrated to the densely crowded mining centres of South Wales, where a living wage can be earned. I have seen fields of

corn in the golden valley waiting in vain for the harvesters; and ruined cottages are painfully apparent in the more distant vales. From the ridge we descend suddenly to the splendid Early English abbey, a peaceful ruin in the midst of rich pastures. The roofless nave and choir still remain, whilst the intact Norman towers have been converted into bedrooms for the adjacent inn. The thirteenth-century abbey or priory must have been a noble place, and there are worse fishing quarters to-day than in the neighbourhood, the Honddhu from Pandy being well stocked with trout. The length of river is, perhaps, twelve miles up to Llanthony. Another fine mountain path leads across the opposite range to Crickhowell, on the Usk.

Familiar with the Monnow during every month from the early spring to late autumn, I have often been struck with the numbers of coarse chub the more sluggish waters contain, especially in backwaters near to mills and weirs. As they are notoriously destructive in trout fisheries it would almost be worth while for the various owners to net the river by regular and concerted action for the elimination of such unwelcome intruders. It is certain that there are far too many of them in the river, to the detriment of game fish. But, taking everything into consideration, there is little to complain of upon the Monnow, my favourite western stream. Give me a well-balanced 'Hotspur' rod, two-jointed, and about 10 ft. 6 in. in length—far preferable, in my opinion, to any split cane rod, especially when throwing against the wind—and little more is required beyond what the fly-book can supply. The art of dry fly fishing is practically non-existent on these mountain streams, where absolutely clear water is unknown. Not that the trout and grayling are uneducated; far from it, as the unskilled angler soon discovers for himself. It is simply that the condition of the water does not require the methods which are necessary on the chalk streams.

The amount of pleasure derived from these angling parties can hardly be expressed. Men will undergo all sorts of inconveniences in order to keep the appointment by the riverside. I remember a reverend friend who after missing his train connexion at a certain junction found no conveyance at the station to drive him to the remote destination. In the end those already assembled had the extreme felicity of seeing the missing one arrive in triumph in a market cart, perched aloft on a pile of hencoops, an ancient cock pecking vigorously at intervals from underneath, without the slightest veneration for the cloth.



NOTES

BY 'RAPIER'

THE news of Lord Suffolk's death came equally as a surprise and a shock. Comparatively a few days before the most distressing announcement was published he had called at this office, and, not finding me in, left his card with a quaintly worded comment on my absence. I thought of a reply to make when next we met racing, never for an instant dreaming that he would watch a finish no more. To meet Lord Suffolk was one of the special delights of Newmarket; he was never without some humorous and shrewd remark to make on what was happening or had happened. He was full of quiet chaff and fun—his friends knew so well the keen twinkle in his eye which was the prelude to a joke or a sarcasm; but behind his satire was always a kindly regard, and he was very tolerant of the weaknesses of humanity. His loss will make an irreparable blank in the lives of those who loved him, and these include all who knew him well. Two or three years ago Lord Suffolk was sorely afflicted with eczema, and, tended by the most devoted of wives, suffered much in a private hospital in London; but though for a little time he almost gave up—one day he was cut in eighteen places and would not take chloroform--pain could not quell his spirit—he was still

the brightest and most delightful of companions, and an hour's chat was not a visit one sometimes pays as a duty to a sick friend, but a genuine pleasure. Nor was he forgotten: the first question asked on a racecourse or elsewhere when his friends met was 'Have you seen Dover lately—how is he?'

I had no idea how admirably he wrote until, reading proofs of the Badminton 'Racing,' I came to his chapter on Newmarket; and I urged him to send me some articles for the 'Illustrated Sporting and Dramatic News,' which I then edited. He said he should much like to do so, and shortly afterwards I received an article entitled 'The Horse Considered as a D——d Fool.' It was so full of humour and originality of expression and idea that I told him it was too good for a sporting paper and ought to have a place in a literary journal; so, altering the title to 'Horse Idiocy,' I gave it to the then editor of the 'Saturday Review,' with which Lord Suffolk at once began a busy connexion, contributing general articles on sport and agriculture and notices of books. No better work was done on the paper, for which in those days many authors of capacity and high reputation still continued to write. He was the first man to whom I applied when this magazine was started, and though he had meantime undertaken other work, and was rarely inclined to write articles, a few I did succeed in extracting from him, and I was very glad to see in an obituary notice which appeared in the 'Daily Telegraph' a warm comment on 'Hawleyana,' a paper he sent me soon after the publication of John Porter's 'Kingsclere.'

Lord Suffolk's letters were always a treat, for they were full of sound sense neatly and quaintly expressed. I have kept many that he wrote to me, and have been looking over them with a sort of melancholy entertainment. So many of his friends will, I know, see these Notes that I am tempted to quote from the correspondence, usually so characteristic of the writer. In November 1883, when I was engaged on the 'Steeplechasing' for the Badminton Library, I had apparently sought some information from him, and this was his reply:—

'I'm afraid I can't help you much. I asked Captain Coventry

what was the best horse he ever rode, and he said Alcibiade, because he went faster, stayed better, and jumped more faultlessly than anything he ever was on the back of. If you could get hold of Captain ——, who was himself a brilliant rider (on the rare occasions when he went for the money), he could tell you more about poor George Ede than anyone. I always see —— at Newmarket, but have no idea where his residence is. ——, or some ruffian of that sort, would be sure to know. Colonel Knox is easily found in London and will tell you anything. You will get nothing out of Captain Smith: he hates being talked to. With Mr. Richardson I am barely acquainted. It was Captain Towneley who rode the celebrated finish at Warwick against Count Batthyany. The Count was leaning forward winning in a canter, Towneley (who had his money on) saw it was hopeless, so he made a desperate rush, just got within arm's length of the Count and hit him over the breeches as hard as he could lay on the whip. The Count sank back in agony, chucked his horse in the mouth, and Towneley shot up and did him a head—then the crowd wanted to lynch poor Batthyany for pulling! I do not think that G.N.H.C. have the faintest intention of lowering their weights, notwithstanding the whining of clerks of courses. It has just occurred to me that Mr. Bevill was one of Ede's most intimate friends and could also probably give you ——'s address. —— will tell you anything if you stand drink.'

There was much talk of a 'jockey ring' some years ago, and I had written to Lord Suffolk on the subject. This is his answer:—'If any thunderbolts are being forged for the chastisement of wicked jockeys I am not in the know. Perhaps in the great Ailesbury year one is almost bound to say that scandals have been rifer than usual, but they have not really, though gossip and d——d nonsense have, and are talked to such a sickening extent that no wonder the immorality and dishonesty of the Turf is in everybody's mouth. I am told gravely that there are now two jockey rings, one headed by A.B.C., the other by X.Y.Z.'—the names I of course omit—'and that they arrange the result of every race. What do you think? Two young men, neither of whom is a genius, who are fairly indifferent jockeys, but are certainly not possessed of that overwhelming superiority which commands the awed respect of their fellow-craftsmen, are supposed to dictate whenever they please to a

Cadogan is right and I am wrong, but I never will lose sight of the fact that racing, call it what you will, *is* gambling with horses, and that people who expect to see betting sensibly diminished must look forward to taking down Methuselah's number in the matter of longevity.'

He was accustomed to express himself plainly. Here is a note, from Charlton Park, headed 'Sexagesima Sunday':—'I return L.'s proof. His metaphors do not concern me at all, but you will observe a note I have made on page 244. Carelessly as I have read these pages, I must say I think they do well enough, and are rather the sort of stuff the public like reading. I don't know if L. anywhere expresses his opinion of Lord G. Bentinck, which is that the latter was an infernal thief. He thinks the same of the late Lord ——, wherein I wholly disagree with him; also of Charles Greville, where I dare say he is right. Lord George was a real out-and-outer. I wonder if we shall ever hunt again? I rode by Newnton Lodge about 12.30 on Friday, and found three fools waiting for hounds. Told them they were likely to have to wait, and rode on; but one of the three became my disciple and followed me to warm rooms and hot lunch at Estcourt. As one speaking *without* book, I should say that ——'s form varies from three to four stone.'

One letter describes a visit to a course of which he much approved:—'I went to Derby. Took my Lady. The very best arranged meeting I have ever seen in my life, and that bit of real country they go into for steeplechasing is refreshing to behold after those tiresome obstacles which are made by Maple and supplied to clerks of courses at wholesale prices.' I wish I could quote another letter about a trainer who, Lord Suffolk fancied, was 'not in a position to appear at a meeting of the Jockey Club with a Bible in one hand and a blank betting book in the other,' but I must be careful of names. It was a standing subject of humorous remonstrance that I pressed for the delivery of 'copy.' 'Our party,' he says in one letter, 'went off admirably. I never saw children look happier. Lady R. came with her daughter—my word! she will make a sensation

when she comes out. She is lovely! And we talked about you, and R. and I put her up to all your tricks—how you pretend to be in a hurry for things that you don't want for months to come,' &c. &c.

Lord Suffolk and I at one time almost decided to write a sporting novel in collaboration, but we never got beyond discussion of a plot. Reviewing he did not, it will be seen, take to very kindly. 'Thanks once more for your kind letter,' he writes in March 1886. 'I'll try to do you a Christmas story or something; but if we really embark on a novel it will take up a good deal of time. I've one or two things on the stocks that may suit the "Saturday." Do you like reviewing? I have done very little at it, but it makes me feel as if I had written an anonymous letter. What slashes they used to have in the "Saturday" in the old days of the first proprietor! I forget his name: he was capital company. I believe I mentioned that Lord Zetland has summoned his familiars for a meeting on Wednesday, but if I can hunt Tuesday shall probably do so, and come up next day by early train. My hounds started this morning, so I had to go after them in a snowstorm to send them home, and, being some way on the journey, rode on to the Meet to see if there was another d——d fool about. Happy to report there was not.'

In the following we were evidently engaged on some work in connexion with racing, but this letter is dated January 1885, and I forget the exact subject:—

'I have read your article with much interest, and entirely agree with what you say. The alterations I have ventured to make are, with one exception, quite insignificant; but the paragraph I have marked you must alter or omit, or you will have every writer on the sporting press down on you like flies on sugar. I know next to nothing about French racing law, but it is inconceivable that a man should be allowed to claim a horse *and* to run him; anyhow, I don't think the Jockey Club would pass the rule. Also there must be a limit to the time of claiming—the hoisting of the numbers would probably be fixed as the moment terminating the possibility of a claim, and, as you well know, there is no betting on selling races before the numbers go up. I

cannot speak from recollection, but have been told that the experiment was actually tried by the desire of the late Sir J. Hawley, and that it failed, as I am pretty sure it would fail now; but if this is the case—which you could easily ascertain at Weatherby's—you could just say, "The French system, which Lord Cadogan advocates, was given a trial at the instance of Sir Joseph Hawley, and found to be a failure in England." When we were discussing this one day, Cadogan, who is one of the driest and most amusing of men, sent me into fits of laughter by a sketch of a mutual friend having a good morning at Newmarket extracting tenners and ponies from various owners by threat of claiming their horses out of the selling races! The Duke of Beaufort, who is endeavouring to kill himself by taking the gout out hunting, writes me that he has nearly finished my MS. and will soon be ready for more.'

One more extract and I must finish. He writes of the excellent material he has received from the late Lord Falmouth and General Pearson, 'both invalids, and one can't just write and thank—one has to give them something in return in the shape of a little racing news. The General's letter for a man of eighty is wonderful. I have really a most interesting collection to leave to my heirs—who will probably detest racing.'

THE
BADMINTON MAGAZINE
June 1898

THE CONFESSIONS OF A CONVERT

BY THE REV. F. ATKINSON

WE all have to do a certain amount of climbing down in our lives, but the performance is oft neither graceful nor gracious. We erect a pedestal and perch ourselves on it, and survey the grovellers on the earth with a fine scorn not unmixed with pity. 'Poor fellows!' we say, 'how little they know about it!' why, if they only knew half as much as—but I refrain. The recollection is painful, and my memory is still fairly good.

Now if there is one thing certain in this life, it is that sooner or later we shall have to come down from that pedestal and mix once more with the grovellers; the manner of that coming down depends largely, of course, on the height of the erection. The higher the pedestal, the longer the climb down and the more difficult. We are sure to bark our shins, to make ourselves stiff and sore, before we descend to earth again. Sometimes, indeed, men have got down without these discomforts, and, by slipping off unobserved, with stealthy tread have rejoined the throng below. But this is rare. Let no one rely upon it. *Non cuivis homini contingit.* A man's friends will see to that. They are the sleepless watchdogs of the upper world—nothing escapes them. They are sure to nudge one another as they see us making our descent; they would be more than human if they did not say, 'I told you so,' and greet us as we put our foot once more on the earth with

that smile of calmly superior knowledge which is so comforting and so consoling.

Youth is the time when men climb up, age when they climb down. When a man is young he mounts Pegasus and soars to the mountain tops; when a man is old, grey Dobbin, steady and sure-footed, carries him along the high road through the valley, a wiser man. When a man is young he has solved all the problems of life, he is in that delightful state of being—omniscience—in which once, and once only, does he find himself. Thou gay and happy undergraduate, seize it and enjoy it before it slips through thy fingers, for thine is the age, thine the opportunity! When a man is young he is enthusiastic and climbs pedestals; when he is old, he climbs down. He has lost the fire of youth; it has died down to the dull cold grey of mature years. He is a soberer and a wiser man, and more tolerant withal.

I began by styling these lucubrations 'Confessions,' and I feel I must do something to justify the title. I will confess something. I climbed in youth, I climbed down in age. I actually held against all comers for many years the damnable and heretical opinion that cricket was a better game than golf. I had never seen golf played till I went up to Oxford, and yet I had had that conviction for years before. I used to read as a boy about the exploits of a certain young Tom Morris of St. Andrews, and felt irritated when I came upon such expressions as 'two up and three to play;' 'Young Tom was trapped off the tee;' 'Andrew was playing the two more on the green,' and jargon like that, which seemed to have no rational meaning, at least to Englishmen, whatever it might have to our friends across the Border. After that I gave up reading about golf at all, and if perchance I saw anything in a newspaper headed with the hated word, I hastily turned the page over and read something else. You see my pedestal was getting pretty high even then; but it got higher. I came to Oxford and actually saw the game itself, but that did not make me change my opinion. They were playing at Cowley, and I saw, on fine summer afternoons, weird men, some indeed dons, some undergraduates, some even professors, walking round that unlovely marsh, carrying bags, or having them carried by local boys (who ought to have been fielding for us at the nets), now and then striking grotesque attitudes, and sometimes the ball with sticks of eccentric shape, but apparently with no sort of enthusiasm or even interest. They seemed absolutely emotionless, and I felt that a game which had any good in it must produce emotions. Football, I knew from

ASSAILED BY PERPETUAL CRIES OF 'FORE!'

experience, could always, and did always, produce emotions, sometimes of a violent kind. Cricket, I felt, could produce them, but held them in reserve for supreme crises; but here was a game which caused its devotees to walk round a marsh on a fine summer afternoon with stern, solemn faces, dour beyond the dourness of a Scotch caddy whose master is off his game. I raised my pedestal another foot, played cricket nine days on end, excepting Sundays, *consule Policinello.*[1]

Well, I remained on that pedestal till I left Oxford, though by that time it had got a good deal higher than I quite liked. I turned giddy when I looked down, and began to have misgivings. It came about in this way. One day I was sitting in the pavilion and heard two men talking together. One said: 'Capital game when you can't play cricket.' I thought he was referring to whist between the showers. Then I heard more: 'I beat him by a putt on the last green, after being two down at the turn.' 'He lofted a stymie I laid him.' 'Enjoyed the day immensely, though I played shocking golf.' Oh, it was golf again, and here, above all places—the pavilion of the Oxford University Cricket Club, the shrine and home of Oxford cricket—that a man dared to speak treason in the garb of unutterable golf jargon gave me a shock from which I did not soon recover. Yet the man did not look a traitor; I thought he looked like a cricketer; he seemed to be taking an intelligent interest in the match that was going on, and he appeared to know a good deal about the game. No, it was not that. I took another look at him, and I saw he was not as slim as he had been; his chin was approaching the double, his waistcoat was wrinkled and protuberant, and he was obviously, I thought, not quite in his first youth. That was it. Golf was a capital game when you could not play cricket, and it flashed across me that one could not always play cricket, and that one day one must wear one's chin double, get fat, and have done with the game, and retire, perhaps as a veteran, lagging superfluous on the stage. I went home and thought more about it, but I got quite brave again. If, I reflected, at the age of sixty-five or thereabouts, one found one's wind not quite so good, and oneself not quite so smart at 'getting down,' one's eye not quite so quick—well one might take to bowls; but to golf, with a jargon belonging to it like that dull, unutterably dull, game as it seemed to me, never! I was firm about that, and went down with my mind fully made up to have nothing to do with it.

In less than two years I was on the committee of a prospective golf club!

[1] 'Punch,' a famous Oxford captain.

It has cost me a good deal to write this sentence, but I must in all fairness make the humiliating confession. It came about in this way. My work took me into the neighbourhood of a royal and famous racecourse, over part of which they played golf. There was plenty of cricket, but there was a good deal of golf. One found traitors at cricket lunches talking golf, not openly, it is true, but in an underhand, sneaking sort of way, as if they were ashamed of it, in low tones and with furtive glances. One saw men in obscure corners of the field, between innings, practising their swing, and altogether the cricket was not somehow like the old cricket; it was tainted in a vague, subtle kind of way by the infection which we stalwarts bravely characterised as a passing epidemic, but which the others loudly proclaimed as endemic, and as having come to stay. They had by this gained boldness, and openly flaunted the accursed thing before our eyes; they told us cricket was doomed, and at most had but a few years to live. Not a man as yet, however, had dared to give up a match for golf; that did not happen till later. One day I met the captain of the club, a genial soul, rotund, the life of many a good match, driving towards our little station, and in his cart I saw the well-known shape of that brown bag, with his initials painted on it in big white letters, containing the hated clubs. 'What!' said I, 'going away?' 'Yes,' he answered, 'to Brighton.' 'To Brighton?' I shouted. 'What on earth for? Bang in the middle of all this cricket?' 'Rather,' he said; 'I am going there to play golf for six weeks!' We saw no more of that man till October.

Meanwhile events moved rapidly. I knew a man who was very anxious for us to start a golf club in our village. He pointed out with great enthusiasm that we had just the land suitable for a green almost at our very doors, a common with sandy soil, undulating, full of natural hazards, and just the right length for a nine-hole course. We had only to lay a little turf in the right places, burn a good deal of heather, and the thing would be done. Several of us innocently enough agreed to help him; we did not intend to play, but, just for the public good, we would do our best. That project, however, was not a success; even the veriest greenhorn, like myself, could see, after a few weeks of desperately hard and enthusiastic work on the part of our friend and his small army of labourers, that there would never be much chance of playing golf on that course, unless one was prepared to start out with a fore-caddy for every hundred yards or so, and a bag full of balls. We were

MY CADDY WAS NOT ENCOURAGING

obliged to give it up, not without jeering on the part of our friends, and, if the truth must be told, not without a certain secret feeling of relief on my part. Our fast bowler had said openly we were going to 'chuck' cricket, and a man who had made a hundred a Saturday or two before said it served us right. I said nothing; but was duly and properly regretful. I was conscious that I had climbed down just a little in consenting even to become a member of the committee of a prospective golf club, and I was still loyal when I came to Scotland, ending my sojourn in the village amid many prophecies that I should soon give up cricket and take to golf. To all of which I shook my head, though I allowed my curiosity to carry me so far as to buy an iron, before I left, from the green-keeper of the neighbouring club. I have that club now, and have never used any other of the same sort, though it has never yet been clear to me why I bought it.

I moved northwards that autumn, and found that my house faced one of the most famous greens in the east of Scotland, where they had played for centuries; where every man and boy, most women and children, played regularly, and the whole male population, except such as were forced to perform certain necessary functions like butchering, and baking, and the like, was given up to the making and carrying of clubs. Did I look out of my windows, even for a second, I saw a man in the well-known attitude I had seen at Cowley years before, preparing to drive. Did I take my dog for a walk over the links, I was assailed by perpetual cries of 'Fore!' For in my innocence I was walking the wrong way of the course, and, with a hardihood that now shocks me, was facing an infuriated foursome who had to wait at the tee till I had gone by. I can understand now their irritation, but at the time it seemed unreasonable and waste of breath, for I did not even realise they were shouting at me. Did I walk down the streets of the town I saw urchins of three feet high playing in the gutter with toy clubs and marbles for balls. It was difficult to talk about anything else in the place, for in the end the conversation always reverted to golf. Everyone who called asked the same question: 'Do you play golf?' One man spied my iron in the corner and began trying it with great flourishes, and scalped my hearth-rug in the process, remarking the while, 'Fine club this, but you'll want a driver. You must make a beginning. Can't live here without playing. Park will fit you out with everything you want.'

I went to see Park, stealthily sneaking into his shop in the

gloom of a certain October afternoon of the year 1894, and emerged with clubs and balls. I did not buy a brown bag: the memory of our captain's still haunted me. I was not prepared to go as far as that yet; but, next day, I played the game and, wonderful to relate, liked it. My caddy was not encouraging, but I enjoyed it, and from that time my life has been one series of disgraceful surrenders. I bought a bag, had my initials placed thereon in large letters; I bought a niblick, more balls, and was regularly instructed by the above-named individual, who growled daily, 'Ye micht dae, if ye could forget the crecket.' I got more and more keen, the fever took strong hold on me; in the end I became an inveterate golfer, and I do not think I have ever regretted it. The game is a perpetual delight because of its variety and its awesome uncertainty. No game yet invented was ever more effectual in eradicating the most deep-seated conceit that ever settled in the human body, nor did any game, surely, more thoroughly teach that habit of careful concentration and painstaking which we were told in our hot youth when Plancus was consul would be so helpful to us in after life. You are bound to be humble during a day's golf, and you are bound to be careful, or most surely will you come to grief; but there are nevertheless moments of supreme joy which make up for multitudinous 'foozles,' and the sweet remembrances of a long putt successfully holed are not to be effaced by any number of missed drives or bunkered seconds; nor are the delights of a good, cleanly hit drive to be dulled by any number of 'duffed' approaches. The emotions it produces are many, some delightful, many painful; but it is good to have known it and to have played it. My descent has long been complete; I have climbed down, my confession is made. I have just come back from a week at St. Andrews.

TROUT FISHING IN THE ARCTIC CIRCLE

BY G. H. NALL

THE sun was shining brightly through the window of the little wooden hut as I tumbled out of bed on August 10 last year. Three days' tramp from the Norwegian coast, across rough fjelds and spongy bogs, one long day of rowing and shooting rapids, varied with spells of walking round dangerous falls, had brought us late the night before to this little settlement in Lapland. The dozen inhabitants, part Swedes, part Lapps, were already hard at work on their scanty harvest, and beyond the small field I caught a glimpse of the river, here widening out into a glittering lake, shining like a sheet of silver, scarcely ruffled by a breath of wind. What a morning for a bathe; how gloriously refreshing to travel-tired limbs!

'Look out!' cried Jack, 'the room's full of them! Light up, quick!' Hsssssssh; the air was suddenly shrill with the high-pitched, hungry whistle of the mosquito. The window I had observed the night before was tightly closed—indeed, would not open; the wide platform fireplace was stuffed up with green boughs. Perhaps my brother had opened the door too boldly, and had been lost in admiration of the snow-line mountains in the distance, or the creatures had worked a way down the chimney. At any rate, to the cover of the bed-clothes I flew, and for five minutes nothing was heard from us but the steady puff-puff of our lips as we filled the room with clouds of stupefying tobacco smoke.

One sometimes hears people who have only met the mosquito in its milder form, perhaps in Norway, or Central Sweden, or in southern countries, or possibly in Lapland in favourable years, or late in the season, maintain that its terrors are much exaggerated. I have not found it so. The worst accounts that I had heard of it before I visited the country, did not come anywhere near the reality. And even if the mosquito crop be a comparative failure in any season, there is a far more deadly insect waiting for you, a harmless-looking little sandfly, which the natives call a knort. The mosquito is a gentleman by comparison. He fights under the rules of civilised warfare; hostilities are openly declared, a shrill blare of trumpets heralds his approach. True, he descends upon you in overpowering hosts, but from the fierce blast when he first sights his foe, to the savage thrust of his lance through your skin, there is nothing secret or underhand about him. Not so the little knort. In ones and twos he creeps stealthily upon you; there is no whistling of wings, no parade of skirmishing round the victim. Quietly he works his way into your clothing, where he seems as much at home as any of the wingless vermin which, fortunately, are comparatively rare in Lapland. His bite is practically painless; you rarely notice it at the time, but on the second day it swells into a big burning wound, to rub or chafe which is intolerable agony.

Even the natives find the insect plague almost unbearable in summer. The true Lapps, who are happy irresponsible nomads, have fled with their tender reindeer to the comparatively safe shelter and the moss pastures of the high fjelds. Throughout lower Lapland now, you will find only a few old Lapps who are too feeble to travel, or here and there an able-bodied man who owns no herds and makes a scanty living by fishing and doing odd jobs on the farms. Jockmock is the largest Lapp village in the country, with a population in winter of some six hundred Lapps. When I passed through it in August, two years ago, I found the whole Lapp quarter locked up and absolutely deserted, and during my three days' stay there, I only saw three true Lapps, one of them a blind boy. The Swedish settlers must perforce stay behind to look after their cows and their corn, but they hate the summer. The work is hard, the sun intensely hot, and there is the ceaseless worry of the insects. To them, winter is the time of enjoyment and holiday. Then the rivers and lakes are frozen; the rough ground is covered with a smooth mantle of crisp snow; sledges, and ski, and skates glide easily over the surface, and the little settlements which are

now cut off from one another by weary miles of heavy water or trackless forests, are once more brought into touch. The days are short, but the Arctic night is almost as bright as our dull winter days. Work is light, chiefly wood-cutting and the carrying of stores from the nearest depôts. Families and friends are again united. Indoors the rooms are well warmed by the huge open platform fireplaces, and there is dancing, and card-playing, and merry-making, whilst outside the young men, and the girls too, are practising ski racing and jumping. Many of them go hundreds

LAPP HUT OR KÅTA

of miles to the great athletic meetings held at Lulea, Bollnäs, and other towns, for they are enthusiastically devoted to the sport.

I remember stopping once at a little two-roomed wooden hut to ask for some milk. The woman brought me the milk in a large silver cup, inscribed with the name of her husband, and the meeting at which he had won it for ski racing. On my expressing interest in it, she brought another larger cup full of milk, and then a larger, and so on, with merry peals of laughter, till the table was covered with these trophies, all brimming with milk, and she slapped me familiarly on the back, crying with wifely pride, 'A fine man he is, a fine man, my husband, the strongest ski runner in Sweden.' I met him outside, a young

giant with loose limbs, a long rolling stride, a grand head and neck, and a perfect set of white teeth, the most courteous of manners, but the funniest of high-pitched voices—one of the characteristics of Lapland. They are a magnificent race of men, these Swedish settlers; they come of a fine stock, and live a healthy, outdoor, simple life. Drink, the curse of the Swede in the towns, cannot be got in Lapland; the people are teetotallers by force of circumstances and legislation. I do not believe that in the whole of Europe you will find such a fine race of peasants as these.

Winter, then, is the season for the hardy tourist who wishes to see Lapland at its best. But for the fisherman who is bent on catching large trout the right time is, as a rule, the middle or end of July. The rivers have then run fairly clear from the snow floods, but are not at their lowest summer level. This, however, is the height of the mosquito season, and whether the sport is worth the price to be paid for it is a question that a man must settle for himself. If I were asked when I am in the country I should unhesitatingly say no; life then seems to me a hideous nightmare of torture. But time plays pleasant tricks with one's memory, and I have few more delightful recollections than those of days spent in this wild land.

The mosquitos have been pretty well smoked into sleepy helplessness, so we can tumble out of bed again. We must wait for that bathe till a good hurricane of wind or a frosty morning clears the air, and content ourselves to-day with the saucer of water that stands on the chair. At these little settlements there seems to be usually a hut containing sometimes one, occasionally two or three rooms set apart for the use of travellers. On some of the main routes through Lapland there are regular stations at intervals of ten or fifteen miles, each of which is under Government supervision, and receives a Government grant proportioned to the style and amount of accommodation provided and the number of boats kept. In these more remote parts I have not heard of any Government grants, but the guest room is usually in fair condition. It is clean and furnished in the simplest style. There are one, occasionally two wooden beds, which pull out at night, but in the daytime are pushed up into the form of narrow sofas, on which the blankets and, if there be any, the not too white sheets and pillows are piled. Sometimes there is a wash-stand, but more often your tiny basin, usually of composition stuff, stands on a chair or box. There is rarely a looking-glass. If you wish to be certain of a shave or an even parting to your

hair, you must carry your own glass, or be content with the inside of your watch. A couple of rough chairs and a table, with—strange to say—a clean glass and a water bottle, complete the furniture, unless in the most civilised huts there is a common painted wooden chest of drawers containing the family linen.

I have heard of a rule that a traveller may stop for two nights at one of these guest rooms, but is then liable to be turned out by the next comer who requires accommodation. Wayfarers are so scarce, however, that I never came across

ROUGH QUARTERS IN THE ARCTIC CIRCLE

anything of this sort myself. The people—I speak of the Swedish settlers, with whom one will always stay; for the Lapps are, as a rule, hopelessly filthy in their habits—are exceedingly kind and hospitable when you understand their ways, but they make no spontaneous effort to do anything for you. You may arrive at midnight half-starved and soaked. The housewife will get up and sleepily make you a bed, but unless you ask for food she will not dream of offering anything. In the morning you will sit for hours waiting for your breakfast unless you pursue the woman to the field, bring her to the kitchen, and tell her what you want cooked. Should you ask if you may stay there a day or two, she

does not show the slightest eagerness to keep you, though your money will be a perfect godsend to her. Come or go, she implies, it is all the same to her; but when you have once made her understand what you want her to do for you, she will spare no trouble in carrying out your instructions. The explanation seemed to me to be that the Swedish travellers themselves almost invariably took their own simple supplies with them, and did their own cooking and so on, so that the kind housewife is quite unprepared for the ways of the Englishman, who is used even in the wilds to be waited upon to some extent by his rough hosts.

A LAPLAND FARM

At this settlement my brother and I had secured two rooms, one in this hut and one in the main building, a somewhat larger two-roomed hut across the corner of the field. This second room was to be our dining- and sitting-room. Breakfast to-day was necessarily a simple meal, for the fish were yet to catch—hard rye biscuit, called Knekke bröd, cheese, salt butter, bowls of fresh milk, sugar and cream in little old silver bowls that had been spared by the curio agents, who have pretty well cleared the country of everything in silver worth collecting, and excellent coffee. Coffee is the mainstay of one's existence in Lapland. The women, and the men too, make it superbly, and seem quite

unable to get through a few hours' work without a strong dose of it. When you have been out on the water for a couple of hours or so, your man, without asking your permission, will quietly row to land. You inquire what he wants; he smiles and replies, 'Kaffe.' From the bows of the boat he produces the inevitable coffee-pot—a beautifully shaped copper one on tripod legs, with a longish straight handle at the side, evidently a very old pattern—a bottle of strong cold coffee, a bottle of milk, and a lump of white rock, from which he chips off with his knife bits that prove to be sugar. A fire of dry brushwood is quickly

AN ARCTIC SUMMER LANDSCAPE

made, and in ten minutes he is luxuriously sipping a cup of perfect coffee, and perhaps gnawing at a bone of dried reindeer which he produces from his wallet. If you ask for some of the coffee he will give it you, but it rarely occurs to him to offer it to you spontaneously. One year I took some tea tabloids with me, and presented a handful to the lady of the hut. They produced quite a sensation in the house. As they swelled and dissolved under the hot water I fancy the people expected to see Pharaoh's serpents come creeping out of the cup, but as for drinking the stuff, excellent though it was, they would have none of it. Tea in their estimation is only a medicine, for they are the victims of

the coffee habit, and any other drink to them is like water to a spirit toper.

It was about half-past nine when, veiled and gloved, and as insect-proof as we could make ourselves, Jack and I started in one of the canoe-like boats with a Swede to row us. A slight breeze was springing up, which carried us quickly down the mile of lake to the head of the rapid. About two hundred yards above the first fall the banks drew close together and the water began to quicken. Jack put on a silver spoon and I a large brown phantom, and, turning the boat's head up stream, we kept the baits working below us, across and across the pool, gradually dropping lower down. The spoon got to work first; a grayling of two pounds, then one of three, then another of two fell to Jack, but there was only one slight pull at my phantom. As we reached the heavier water, and the light boat pitched and bounded over the waves of the rapid, we found that the sunken rocks, the strong eddies and backwaters made the proper working and the safety of the baits an anxious task. Trolling on a quiet lake is tame enough, but in a big rapid it taxes all your energies and skill, and you have little time to think of the peril, the almost certain death that faces you, if the boatman makes a single mistake, while your nerves are tingling under the remorseless, infuriated attacks of the bloodthirsty mosquitos.

As my long line swung round into a backwater, and I quickly pulled in half a dozen yards and raised the rod to see that all was right, the heavy phantom skimmed the surface for a moment, and then, catching a wave, skipped a foot into the air. There was a silver flash, a heavy eddying plunge, the reel rang out, and I was fast in an unmistakable trout that had caught the bait as it descended. Up the backwater he came, then turned as he neared the boat and made for the heavy stream. I was using, as I always do in this sort of fishing, a twisted trace, with a foot and a half of stout single salmon gut at the end, strong enough to hold anything except a rock, and a powerful 14-ft. steel-centred split cane rod. A rod of this kind is perfect for the work. It is heavy enough for fish up to fifteen pounds, and yet not too hard on pound grayling; you can use it for spinning without fear of spoiling it for fly-fishing, and it will stand any amount of rough wear, though I always objected to the boatmen using mine as a pole for slinging baggage on. The trout was firmly hooked, and had little chance unless he could get into the heavy water and break me on a rock. The rod soon settled the question, and in six minutes from the time he was hooked we

had him gaffed in the boat, a male fish of eight and a half pounds.

Half an hour more on the top pool produced nothing except another grayling of two and a half pounds to Jack's spoon, evidently the favourite with the grayling, who treated my large brown phantom with studied contempt. There was no boat on the lower pool, so we landed with our trappings, whilst the man performed the very dangerous looking feat of shooting the fall, stern foremost, and picked us up a hundred yards below. The head of this lower pool would have been a magnificent salmon catch, had salmon been able to ascend so far; unfortunately,

ABOVE THE RAPIDS

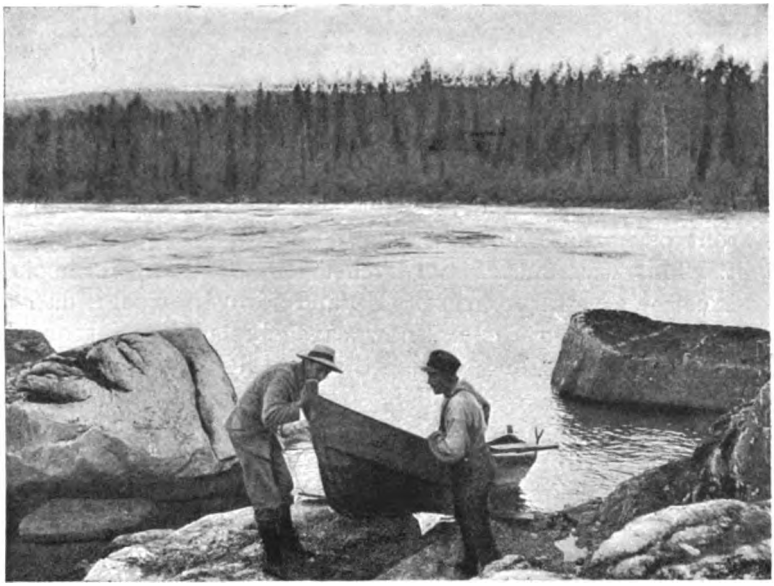
they were stopped by the big foss, one hundred and fifty miles from here. In spite of the protests of the man, who regarded a fly as useless for anything bigger than grayling, I put on a large double-hooked Childers, and cast rapidly over the water.

About twenty yards down there was a heavy plunge, and I was fast in another large fish, but the hold was weak, and in a minute or two, after one rush up stream, the fish was gone. I stuck to the fly, and with several changes of size and pattern, fished the top of the pool out, getting one more big rise, but touching nothing. Further down the pool I put on the bait again, and we tried both spoon and phantom for some while

without any success beyond small grayling. The bottom of the pool was divided by a large island with a little conical Lapp hut on it, inhabited by a family of four—father, mother, grandmother and son. Down either side of this island the waters went foaming in a series of rocky rapids that were quite unfishable from a boat; but just before the broken water began, there was some thirty yards of swiftly flowing, oily looking water, a most likely lie for big trout. I put on a brown phantom, Jack a large blue one, and he was quickly fast in a sulky bottom grubber that refused to show itself or to stir a yard from the spot in which it took. His rod was less powerful than mine, and he did not care to put on too heavy a strain, so it was a weary twenty minutes before we managed to stir the beggar out of its lair, and another five minutes before I got the gaff into it. It was a fish of precisely the same weight as the other, eight and a half pounds, but a female, and not nearly so brilliant in colouring.

It was one o'clock now, and we were all pretty tired with the heavy work. We rowed back to the head of the pool, dragged the boat overland to avoid the fall, spun once more across the top pool without success, and then turned our head homewards. Just as we were rounding the last corner before the lake, my phantom, which was trailing on a very short line, caught fast, as I thought, in a bed of weeds that I then noticed for the first time. I gave the rod a hard jerk to try to free the line without the trouble of turning back, when, to my consternation, up into the air flew a half-pound perch, that had swallowed the big bait almost down to its tail. Jacob, the man, screamed with delight, but I think he laughed more heartily at another feat of arms that this same corner witnessed a few weeks later. We had run short of large phantoms, for these bouldery rapids are terribly hard on one's limited stock, and so my brother, with deft fingers, built a monstrosity for himself, out of a pike flight and the polished red leather pocket of a Gladstone bag. It certainly was a very beautiful bit of craftsmanship, and it spun to perfection. Jacob made a little song about it, with a refrain about 'a little red fish, a bright red fish, ha! ha!' but the trout somehow, and the grayling too, fought shy of it, and it seemed as though the artist had lavished all the resources of his skill and fancy upon it in vain, till one evening, at the very same corner, there was a savage run at it, and into the boat was hauled fiercely fighting, with spines erect, all aglow with glorious colour, a splendid perch of a pound and a half. Jacob's childish delight was a pleasure to contemplate.

These Swedish farmers are charming companions. Men of extraordinarily powerful physique, most skilful in the management of their boats, good-tempered, intelligent, and courteous, they are almost childishly simple in many of their ways. No joke seems to be too babyish to please them, and set them off into peals of merry laughter. I remember one day, when we were rowing down a long lake, Jack put out a spoon on a hand line to trail behind the boat. The big man, who was steering in the usual way with two oars in the stern, leant over the side and gave the line two or three quick tugs to pretend it was a fish.



DRAGGING THE BOAT OVERLAND

Jack saw through the transparent trick, but pretended to haul in the line and then let it out, as though the fish had gone; the trick was repeated again and again, and for an hour down that lake this little play kept the three men in fits of merriment. Then on one hot day, how interested the boatmen were to see me spending a lazy time, as I lay in the boat, in catching some of the local flies on which the grayling feed, and stowing them up in a little wooden match-box to be copied on some future day, and how delighted when one fly escaped as I introduced another specimen! But I think they were most amused when they found me carrying to England, as curios, some of their

net weights, stones wrapped up in a sort of envelope of birch bark.

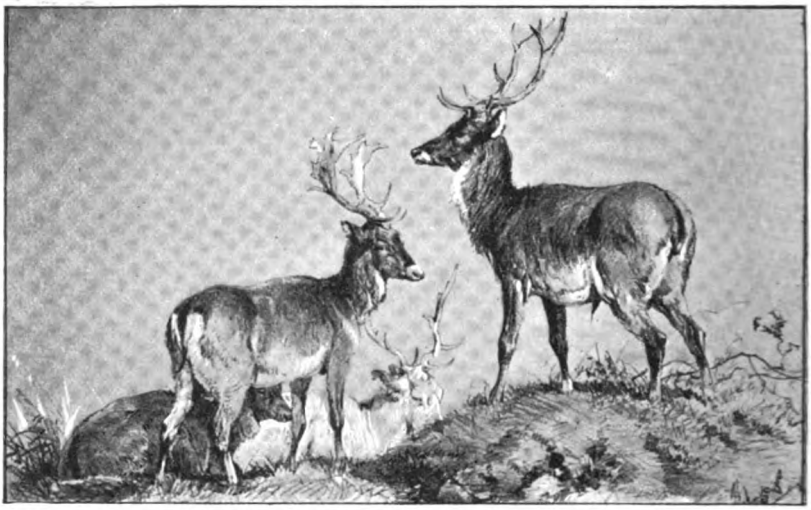
The morning's catch came to two trout of eight and a half pounds each, and eight grayling of two to three pounds, with the little perch. Our midday meal was quite a feast; two grayling excellently broiled (the trout went into the salt tub), and the usual knekke bröd, butter, milk and coffee. You must do without meat in Lapland till you can bring yourself to gnaw the hard evil-looking chunks of dried reindeer flesh. We were off again by half-past three, but now heavy clouds were gathering in the north, and before we reached the first pool a dull flash and distant rumble of thunder boded ill for our sport. A few small grayling, of a pound to a pound and a half, came to my brother's spoon, but no bigger fish seemed stirring. As my phantom was doing nothing, I put on a largish spoon, painted a brilliant red inside. It had swept again and again over one bit of water in the centre of the pool without a sign of a fish stirring to it, when it was seized at last by a trout that must have watched it flash in front of its nose till it was goaded into fine frenzy by the sight. This was one of the liveliest fish I have ever hooked, not excepting fresh-run grilse. Up and down the pool it dashed, now springing into the air, now savagely lashing out on the surface of the water, and sending the foam flying in all directions, never quiet for a second, till its frantic struggles exhausted it, and the fight was over as suddenly as it had begun. It was a smaller trout, of only five and a half pounds, but it was lightly built, on the lines of a grilse, and in splendid condition.

The ceremony of landing, shooting the rapid, and re-embarking was gone through again, but this time we tried the rapid below the fall with the baits. It was rather ticklish work. The water came tearing down the narrow channel of the fall, and then, as it were, raced in a boiling, foaming river down the centre of the quiet pool below, forming eddying backwaters on either side. Jacob crept up one backwater as near to the foot of the fall as he dared go, then put the boat, bows up-stream, through the surging waves, which curled high above us, threatening every instant to swamp the straining craft, but only drenching us with spray, as they fled madly past, and so to the shelter of the other backwater, whilst our lines swung the baits across the rapid thirty yards below. The very first voyage was successful. My line, throbbing through the angry waves, suddenly stopped dead. As we plunged into the quiet water there was a heavy dead pull, and the stream tore and hissed over the taut line. It was a moment of infinite

danger, but Jacob was quick to rise to the situation. With a stroke he had the head of the boat round, and in another stroke or two we were below the fish, which still lay apparently motionless in the very centre of the stream, evidently safe behind a large boulder. I put on every inch of strain that I could; my stiff rod bent almost into a complete circle, as slowly and slowly the big fish gave ground and was reluctantly dragged into quieter and safer water. One or two heavy efforts it made to get back

LAPLAND TROUT

again to its rock, but it was too late; not an inch would I yield in that dangerous direction. It became simply a struggle of steady pulling, but I knew the strength of my tackle, and so, after what was only an eight minutes' battle by the watch, but seemed a good quarter of an hour, he rolled over within reach of the gaff, and was soon floundering in the bottom of the boat. He, or rather she, was a perfectly made female fish of ten pounds. The woman who cleaned it brought me a large 2½-inch hook, with a



THE MUCKLE STAG OF BEN MORE

BY CAPTAIN THE HON. R. C. DRUMMOND

It was one of those days in mid October, not uncommon in the Highlands, which seem to have missed their rightful place in summer and recall much of its warmth and brightness. It was hard to believe that winter was at hand, yet a presage of it grew visible in the reds and yellows of the dying bracken. The sky was cloudless, and no wind stirred the dry heather; the blue hills in the distance were dim with the soft haze of heat. Now and again a humble bee boomed noisily overhead, and from its perch on a solitary Scotch fir a hooded crow gave out its harsh note. Swarms of midges hovered by the still waters of the loch, its surface stirred here and there by slow-moving circles born of rising trout. About half a mile away stretched the smooth waters of the Atlantic, dotted with the brown sails of fishing smacks; and far beyond lay the Western Isles, some green and smiling, others dark, rocky and apparently devoid of vegetation.

As the shadows lengthened, a stag, which had been feeding in a rocky corrie under Ben More, moved down towards the loch. The tiny trout darted from the shallows as he waded out in the cool waters, and, having quenched his thirst, shook the water

from his dripping flanks and leisurely ascended the rough hillside. His coat was dark, and his antlers looked almost black in the slanting sun-rays. Rough and gnarled about the base, they swept aloft in wide-spreading curves, and seven sharp tines appeared on either horn. An old deer he was, just a muckle beast, and a knowing hand would have guessed his weight as he stood at eight and twenty to thirty stone. Many a time he had foiled the well-laid plans and skilful advance of the stalker, in many a hard winter had he nibbled the hollies and come through with little flesh on his bones, to pick up strength and condition with the sprouting of the tender spring grass. Pacing up a knoll he stretched his muscular neck, laid back his antlers, and sniffed the air, gazing uneasily around; then dashed his great head impatiently towards his flanks and licked himself vigorously. The October midge is most active towards sundown.

A herd of red deer which had been concealed by the shoulder of the hill, began to ascend the slope in single file, a hind leading. The muckle beast gazed at them intently. Coming to a stand about a hundred yards away, a stag separated from his companions and walked slowly towards the knoll. Though the best of the herd, he was but young, and his horns, well proportioned as they were, showed only six points. Behind him, at a respectful distance, followed some smaller stags, while the ladies of the party remained halted in the background.

The young stag approached within a few yards of the muckle beast, and the two red deer stood gazing at each other.

Suddenly the big fellow stretched his great horns flat back on his shoulders and gave vent to a prolonged roar. Scarcely had the echoes returned from the tall hills beyond the loch when, in a single bound, he was upon the intruder. The young stag stood bravely for a moment, then turned and fled, the muckle beast giving him a farewell prog in the haunch which left an ugly red score and sent a thin stream of blood trickling down his side. The old red deer watched him as he trotted sulkily away, then quietly assumed the command of the herd. The small stags kept well out of his reach on the outskirts, and the hinds submitted obediently to their new master.

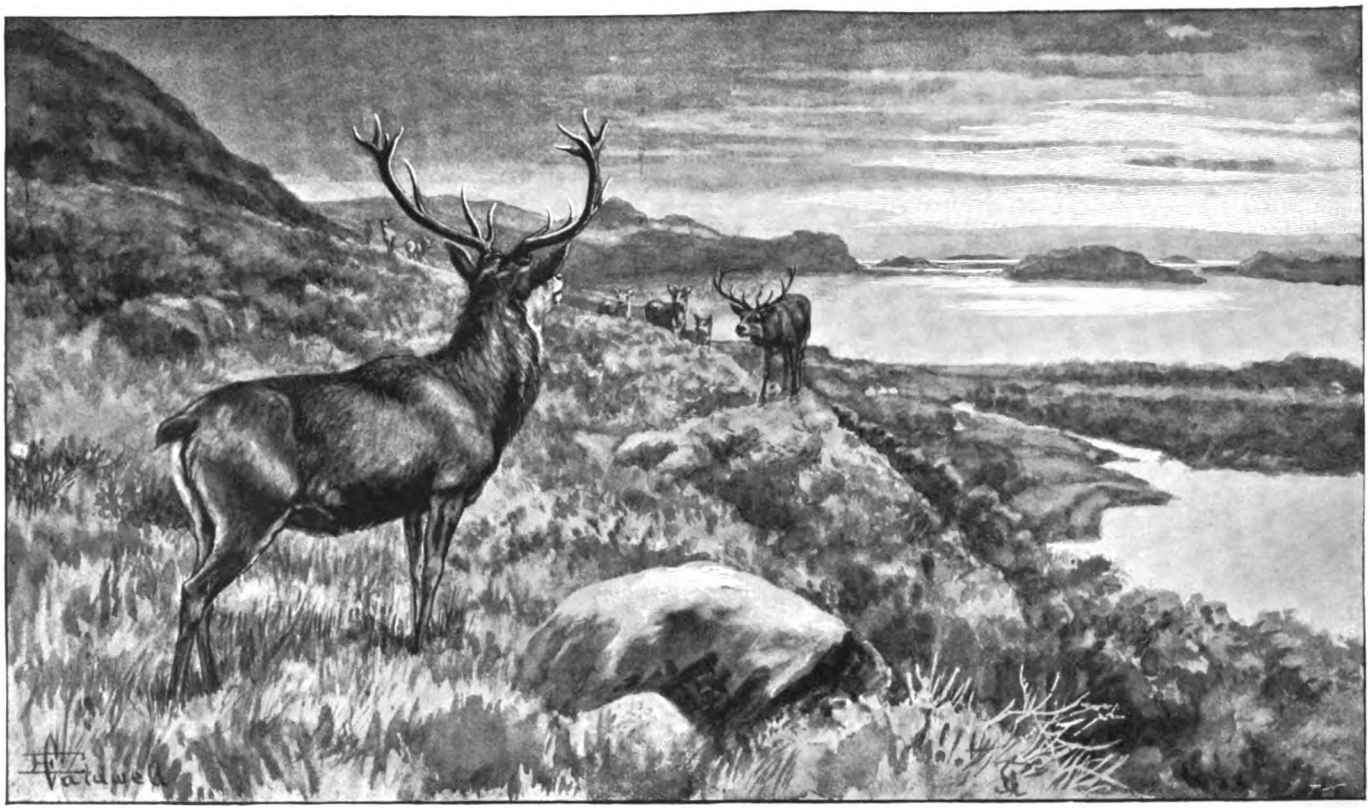
Imperceptibly the sun nears the broad Atlantic and soon sinks from view, the bare tops of the mountains retaining for a time the sunlight that has faded from below. Westward, the sky glows with a warm yellow radiance. The sea is smooth, oil-like, glistening with opal tints. On the shore with sudden surge the slow rollers break, marking the intervening silence. The

long twilight of the western coast slowly creeps on, till glen and corrie are shrouded in gloom and fainter shadows mantle on the open hills. The air, still warm with the heat of the day, sweet with the fragrance of fir woods, bog myrtle and heather, has a moist feel: from time to time a chill current blows faintly, then dies away. Night broods on the forest. The muirfowl and the grouse are at rest in the heather, the stillness of the summer night is only broken by the roar of the burns falling in the mountains, scarce noticed in daylight, now seeming to fill the air. The moon, which is near the full, creeps up the sky, touching the calm waters of the loch in silver, bathing the broad glens and silent mountains in soft light, deepening the heavy shadows in the corries.

Suddenly from the loch side sounds the hoarse roar of a stag, and the muckle beast, who has been resting in the heather, rises slowly to his feet. Again the challenge rings out across the hills, and the long coarse hair on his neck and shoulders bristles and stands erect, as, with fiery eye and antlers raised, he awaits the enemy. Presently over the brow of the hill appear the head and horns of the stranger. In length and spread, his antlers are little inferior to those of his rival; but they are more symmetrical and much lighter in colour. He is one of half a dozen deer imported from Her Majesty's herds at Windsor.

The two stags slowly approach, halting about five yards apart. By chance they have met on a broad, flat rock which, jutting out on a rough and stony part of the hill, promises a nasty fall, should either of the combatants be forced over the precipitous outer face. For a few seconds they stand facing each other, then, simultaneously lowering their heads, the antlers come together with a clash that might be heard half a mile away. With locked horns and panting breath the red deer struggle, each striving to force the other back. Meantime the hinds, with unconcerned airs, wander some fifty yards away, now plucking at a tender stalk, anon glancing—carelessly to all appearance, but in reality with keenest interest—at the battle of the stags. For who more interested than they, since the victor will take the spoils of war, represented in this instance by themselves?

By mutual consent the fighters separate and stand with lowered head and watchful eye, as of fencer on guard. For a minute or two they feint and parry, wielding their huge antlers with amazing strength and quickness. Warming to their work, thrust follows thrust in quick succession, but neither finds a weak place in the defence of his opponent, and as yet neither has



THE YOUNG STAG APPROACHED WITHIN A FEW YARDS OF THE MUCKLE BEAST

sustained a scratch. Suddenly the smaller stag springs to one side and stabs at the flank of the muckle beast, who, more unwieldy, fails altogether to arrest the lunge. The light-coloured horns strike with a force that buries the blunt points in the flesh, and on the instant blood spurts from the wound.

A shrewd blow. The big stag totters on the very lip of the precipice, and it seems that nothing can save him. But his adversary makes too certain of victory. Instead of pressing on at the critical moment, he pauses for a second, and that momentary delay saves the muckle beast. He drops on his knees and, his hind quarters still erect, rests with feet firmly planted against a ledge on the brink of the overhanging rock. Again and yet again his adversary charges, but right well the Highland stag maintains his reputation, receiving each blow fair and true on his massive antlers, giving way not an inch.

Strong though his heart, he cannot long sustain so unequal a combat. While both are tiring, the big stag is the more exhausted of the two. His breath comes in quick sobbing gasps, his red tongue lolls from his mouth. A white fleecy cloud drifts over the moon, and the shades of night gather more thickly round the combatants. Across the loch the mountains rise black and lofty, their summits sharply outlined against the clear, pale sky. The silence of the mild October night is only broken by the frequent clash of the antlers and the roar of the burns among the lonely hills.

For some years the muckle stag had held undisputed sway in the forest. One after another he had vanquished all the big stags of Ben More till not one of the original inhabitants ventured to dispute his pre-eminence. It remained for a deer of Sassenach breed to bring him to his knees and threaten him with a defeat which now seems imminent. For the brave old stag is almost done. After a long and arduous bout, in which the latter scarcely succeeds in retaining his position, his adversary disengages his horns and, retreating a couple of paces, prepares for a final and irresistible assault.

A big stone, dislodged by one of the hinds a few yards up the hill, clatters noisily across the plateau of rock. The Windsor stag looks round. In a second the muckle beast regains his feet, springs away from the precipice, and with furious lunges drives the other along the level rock. With horns knit together they pause on the brink, but the superior weight of the muckle beast slowly tells, and in the struggle the English stag's head is forced up till the light-coloured horns trail useless over his shoulders.

The big stag closes in with redoubled effort, and the hind feet of the plucky foreigner are forced from the ledge. Too late he regrets the daring spirit that led him to challenge so terrible an adversary. A confused roaring sounds in his ears, the heavy glaze of exhaustion dulls the eye but now so keen. For a second he scrambles on the brink of the rock, beating frantically with his fore feet; but a final blow dislodges him, and he rolls over, strikes heavily on the jagged rocks twenty feet below, turns twice or three times, then lies, sorely hurt but still alive.

Descending to the spot, the Highland stag smells the blood which here and there stains the coat of the fallen hero, then, standing over the prostrate form, he lays back his antlers and gives out the note of victory in a long, hollow roar.

The white cloud slips easily under the moon, and its full radiance breaks on the scene.

On the same night, and about the hour when the stags were waging battle, Lord Bairney, the owner of Ben More deer forest, and a single guest, were seated in the cosy smoking-room of the lodge. The contrast between the two men was very marked. Lord Bairney was about thirty years old, and his clearly cut features were suggestive of high breeding and intelligence; humour lurked about the curves of his mouth and in the glint of his blue eyes. His companion was fully ten years older. His cheek-bones were high and wide apart; keen grey eyes looked from under bushy brows, and rather a long face ended in an iron-grey beard, closely trimmed. His upper lip was clean shaved, and his square, clumsy figure showed to little advantage in the orthodox evening suit.

'I am afraid it canna be done,' observed the latter.

'My dear Colonel, pray do not bother about it,' replied Bairney cheerfully. 'I only made the suggestion as you seemed interested in stalking, and I thought you might like to invest in a deer forest. Murray and McSqueezer will advance the money, I know.'

'Dangerous people,' said Colonel Rintoul—he commanded a volunteer battalion in his native 'ceety'—'McSqueezer is about the sharpest practitioner in Glaisgy. Let me see,' he continued, consulting a memorandum, 'Ben More deer forest is valued at 30,000*l.* and lets for 1,500*l.* It is already mortgaged for 15,000*l.* and you want to borrow another 10,000*l.* on second mortgage at 4½ per cent. without collateral. That leaves a very small margin for depreciation. I fear, my lord, it is too risky for my house.'

FOR A SECOND HE SCRAMBLES ON THE BRINK OF THE ROCK

'Not another word, Colonel. No more business, I beg of you. Mix yourself a whisky-and-soda and let us talk of deerstalking.'

'Your lordship is very obleeging,' rejoined the Colonel, helping himself liberally from the whisky decanter. 'I would like fine to kill a stag. My acquaintance in Glaisgy would think me clean daft to say such a thing, but if I had na been in business I would have been a real keen shooter.'

'Well, although it is rather late in the season, you shall try your luck in the forest to-morrow. Perhaps you may chance on the muckle stag of Ben More.'

'He will be a grand beast, I suppose?'

'The best in the forest by a long way. The Highlanders swear he has a charmed life, and that the bullet was never cast that would harm him. I must say it is curious how often he has been missed, and by good shots too. If you kill the muckle beast, Colonel, you will be the hero of the countryside.'

'A'm a graun' shot at the target,' exclaimed Rintoul, with sparkling eyes, and lapsing into broader Scotch in his excitement; 'and A'm no gaun' to miss the red deer beastie gin I hae a chance at him. I'd like fine to see his horns in the parlour at hame.' Colonel Rintoul's stalking enthusiasm was worked up to a high pitch by the time he retired for the night.

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'Shoot, man, shoot! Why don't you shoot?' exclaimed William MacDonald, in a low hoarse whisper, his face glowing with excitement, as Rintoul, into whose hands he had just thrust the rifle, stared helplessly about him.

'Where—where are they?'

'Diaoul—ten thousand devils!' muttered the Highlander. 'Do you no see the big stag, the muckle sta—ag of Ben More lying down and his horns showing above the heather? Oh, if she had but the silver bullet! And the mist is coming down and we'll lose the shot! It's a grand chance,' he continued, in a lower tone, 'and his lordship so keen for the body to bring home a stag, however I would work it.'

At length Rintoul managed to discern the form of the red deer where it lay, about eighty yards distant, half concealed among the bracken. His ardour for deer-stalking was somewhat damped. He was wet through with crawling along burns, and every muscle ached with his unaccustomed exertions. The day was well advanced, and the white mist, which since morning had rested low on the hills, was now encroaching on the lower ground.

Fleecy wisps of vapour floated gently along the hill; already the loch below was hidden from view.

The crack of the rifle rang out, and as the smoke curled aloft, the muckle beast started to his feet and stood gazing at his foes, his antlers looming gigantic in the uncertain light.

'Quick—the other barrel!' said William. The bullet departed. So did the big stag, and seizing the rifle William crammed in a couple of cartridges as he ran forward. Rintoul was left behind, deserted in the mist on the lonely mountain-side. Collapsing in the cold, wet heather, he cursed the Highlands in general, and the forest of Ben More in particular. None but a fool or a Highlander, he thought, would want to go deer-stalking a second time. Surely never was gallant Colonel of Volunteers in such an unhappy position. Most heartily did he wish himself back in the snug parlour of his house in Buchanan Street.

A shout came from below, and gaining some courage from the whisky flask, Rintoul made shift to pick his way towards the sound. William met him before he had gone far. The stalker's light grey eyes glittered and his face wore a queer expression. In his hand was a knife covered with blood.

'The st—ag is dead,' said William in solemn accents. 'The Kornel will just be an extraordinar' shot. He has killed the muckle stag of Ben More, and eh, but it's a prood man he should be this day!'

'Where is the beast?' asked Rintoul, as yet scarcely realising his good fortune.

The stag had fallen on a steep and rocky part of the hill, and its body was resting against a boulder. About ten yards above a plateau of rock jutted out on the hillside. A pool of thick, dark-coloured blood lay below its chest, where the stalker had used the knife. A noble animal it looked with its thick dark coat and long curving antlers, each of which showed six well-defined points. 'It's a prood man the Kornel should be this day,' observed William again, with a sidelong glance at Rintoul, who was gazing on the object of all his ambition with feelings impossible to describe. It was, as he often said in after years, the proudest moment of his life. He positively danced with joy as he gloated over the huge proportions of the red deer, and thought of what his friends in 'Glaisgy' would say when they heard the important news.

'Where did the bullet strike?' he asked suddenly.

William pointed to a wound—it was rather far back. 'The backbone was broken,' he explained. 'It was a fine shot, sir.'

'The beast has grand horns to it,' continued Rintoul, 'but are they no just a thought light in the colour?'

'It will be the head of a Hielan' st—ag, whateffer,' replied William, with another cautious look at the Colonel. It was evident that death had overtaken the stag very suddenly, for already its eyes were dull and glazed. The body, too, was cold, and its limbs stiff. These conditions were always present, as the stalker explained to Rintoul, in the case of red deer shot through the backbone.

On their return Lord Bairney met the party at some distance from the lodge, and his quick eye at once observed the deer on the pony. He exchanged a few rapid words in Gaelic with the stalker—sharp Sassenach ears might have caught the word 'Windsor'—then turned to Rintoul with delight and astonishment depicted in his features.

'My dear Colonel,' he said, with gravity befitting the occasion; 'I congratulate you very heartily. You have succeeded where some of the crack rifle shots of the day have failed. I had no idea you were such a skilful marksman, and can scarcely believe this is your first experience of deer-stalking. You have killed the muckle stag of Ben More, and such a feat must not remain unrecorded.'

'Hoots, mon—my lord, I should say—just give me the horns to take home and I'm no wanting any records.'

'You must let me have my own way about this,' said his lordship rapidly. 'We will have it in the papers of course.'

'Aiblins the "Glaisgy Herald" wad gie it a bit corner,' suggested Rintoul, in his broadest Scotch.

In the smoking-room that evening the hero of the day had just finished his fourth tumbler of whisky toddy and his third account of the death of the big stag.

'By the way,' observed Bairney, carelessly, 'how about that mortgage?'

'You may consider the matter settled, my lord. I'll put the papers in hand as soon as I reach Glaisgy.'

CRICKET FROM THE LADIES' TENT

BY ESTHER HALLAM

WHY do men consider cricket as their exclusive property, and believe no girl ever really understood or truly cared for the finest of games? Men, of course, have always been, and will continue to be, the practical cricketers, and no one wishes it otherwise; it is essentially a man's game, as it needs strength and pluck, and endurance, and many other hardy qualities. But many women have quite as keen a love for it as the cricketers themselves; they can appreciate the deft turn of the wrist that sends a ball to the boundary, or the wiles of a slow left-handed bowler, without having touched a bat, or being able to pitch a ball within two feet of the object aimed at. It is rather trying when a girl knows the Badminton 'Cricket' by heart, and is well up in the theory of the game, to observe her men friends smile a superior smile when she speaks of a 'half-volley' or a 'yorker.'

A delightful sort of friendliness is to be found in a cricket crowd. It is delightful sometimes to sit in the ring, for you get the feeling more generously there than in the secluded grandeur of the ladies' tent. I have sat next to great hulking men, smoking the vilest tobacco, content to be squashed and shouted across, simply because of the kindly fellow-feeling that cricket gives. Then, too, I always want to make friends with most of the small boys I see at a cricket match; their violent partisanships, their frequent quarrels, their intense interest, seem to me the model way of really enjoying the game. The ragged urchins who hang round the turnstiles of a county ground, without the necessary sixpence to admit them to paradise, watching with wistful eyes

the happy people who go gaily through, seem to me pathetic little figures. Charitable societies do not recognise 'cricket hunger,' but it is very real to these scraps of humanity. If they do get in, once in a while, what a gorgeous day they have! I remember four or five most excited little fellows who were sprawling flat on their chests just outside the tent. Ranjitsinhji that afternoon was cheerfully making runs off all the bowlers opposed to him, and these devoted boys were noting his every hit on most dilapidated bits of paper; in fact, one of them even went so far as to put down all the runs made by the other batsman to Ranji's credit! When the Prince drove a ball to the boundary, five pairs of legs waved ecstatically, and five pairs of boots confessed their need of the cobbler.

Ranjitsinhji's characteristic figure will be missed on English cricket fields this summer, where he was always the centre of interest and enthusiasm. Who does not know his little way of glancing behind him, as if in surprise, when he has sent a fast ball to the boundary by that inimitably deft turn of the wrist that suggests a kitten's playfulness? Mr. C. B. Fry has cleverly compressed his batting into a sentence when he says, 'Ranji has made a science of taking liberties.'

But there are many striking personalities in cricket besides Ranjitsinhji.

That great batsman Gunn of Nottingham always impresses me; there is something so strong and trustworthy about him that it seems as if the side he was on could never go to pieces. I pity the bowler who has to face the apparently immovable rock that Gunn resembles as he stands before his wicket, his broad white hat half hiding the keen, kind face. Besides the stern determination expressed in every inch of his splendid height, the bowlers opposed to him seem so many baffled tricksters. Of course Gunn is bowled or caught sometimes, but when he is once set there seems no reason why he should not stay in for a fortnight.

Another of the giants of cricket is the Somerset captain, Mr. S. M. J. Woods, whose methods are in very direct contrast to Gunn's. Like the warriors of old, Mr. Woods is a 'mighty smiter,' and perhaps no batsman has given the cricket-loving public more complete satisfaction than he. What a roar of welcome goes up from the assembled thousands at the Oval as he comes down the Pavilion steps in his confident, vigorous way! The crowd even rejoice in seeing their own bowling treated with scant respect if it is Woods who sends Richardson's or Hayward's best ball banging up against the gasometer. It is an exhilarating

thing to see Woods opposed by a fast bowler. (I don't think he would care for Tyler's slows, if he ever had to face them.) Watch his eager look as he waits till the exact moment, then gets his bat well under the ball, and away it flies out of the ground, while the fielders tear their hair.

Mr. Woods does such daring things, too! He ought to have been caught so many times that he wasn't. It is the old story of 'fortune favours the brave;' if he had dared a little less, his reputation would not be as big now as it is. His bowling and his fielding are made of the same stuff as his batting. Woods never does things by halves; he brings the same vigorous enthusiasm to bear on everything, and that is perhaps partly the secret of his great popularity. It is a spirit the British public admire.

Somerset is rich in having two such batsmen as Mr S. M. J. Woods and Mr. Lionel Palairet. Those who do not half understand all that goes to make the scientific finish, the 'art concealing art,' of Palairet's batting, can still get much delight from simply watching his easy, graceful, and effective ways of treating all sorts of bowling. Cricket is not a game of chance to Lionel Palairet: it is a game of skill. It is an artistic pleasure to see him bring off that late cut of which he is so fond, and which is one of the few things that could not be improved.

Much as batsmen differ in their styles and methods, they still have some sort of family likeness; but did ever two bowlers bowl alike? It is a curious fact that all bowlers have some little idiosyncrasy, some trick or turn that is exclusively their own. To take a straight run up to the wicket and deliver the ball at the other end seems a simple thing; indeed it is so simple that all bowlers with any claim to distinction find it necessary to add some little embellishment of their own.

Mr C. J. Kortright has an alarming way of getting up steam, by working his arm piston-wise, back and forth, as he runs down. His comrade, F. G. Bull, always reminds one of a certain picture in which a gallant soldier has just received a bullet in his breast and is staggering backwards with upthrown arms. Perhaps the oddest method is Mold's, who holds the ball in his left hand, and then suddenly changes it to his right just as he reaches the wicket.

I can remember laughing at a Cambridge bowler who threw himself so far back when bowling that once he suddenly sat down by the wicket, having quite lost his balance. As Oxford did not want to be outdone in humorous bowlers, they produced a man who began his run from about where mid-off stands, and twisted round to the wicket with the quaintest effect.

A characteristic and original method is Mr. C. B. Fry's. No one who has seen him bowl will forget his unusually long run, the vigorous manner in which he jumps clear off the ground just before he delivers the ball, and the way he throws himself forward till his chest almost touches one bent knee.

'Varsity cricket is always interesting; it is so absorbing to see the cricketers who are going to make themselves names while they are still at Oxford or Cambridge. There is a sort of holiday air about their matches; though they play good cricket, they do not take themselves quite so seriously as county cricketers.

I remember a match which Oxford won handsomely, early in the second afternoon, and the undergraduates could not restrain their delight. They roared comic songs in various keys, desperate, half-muffled cries for 'Help! help!' were heard, and there was much laughter. As it was warm and sunny, the Pavilion windows were all open, and the uproar filled the cricket-ground. What self-respecting county would have dared to enjoy itself like that?

I wonder, by the way, if there is any colour it is so hard to distinguish from white as the real Cambridge blue? If ever I wanted to wear a Cambridge favour, I should buy the palest blue ribbon I could find, wash it several times, bleach it in the sun for about a week, and then don it, proudly conscious I had got the exact shade the Cantabs affect.

I wonder, too, if the men who laugh at feminine enthusiasm for cricket know that round-arm bowling was first introduced by a girl? An old Sussex cricketer, Mr. Willes,[1] who lived in Nyren's time (Dear old Nyren, how strenuously he tried to protect his favourite game—or 'my beloved amusement,' as he calls it—against 'the modern innovation of throwing instead of bowling the ball'!), was so fond of cricket that in the winter he used to play in a large barn, with his sister as a bowler. As he was accustomed to play against underhand bowling, which was the only style then in use, Mr. Willes was considerably baffled by the girl's half-round, half-under sort of balls. So, thinking to puzzle other batsmen in the same way, he made a successful *début* as a round-arm bowler: hence Nyren's protest. Where would Richardson and Mr. Woods have been if it had not been for Miss Willes?

Whether he is taking wickets or not, Richardson is a bowler it is always interesting to watch: he looks so resistless, like a big

[1] This account of John Willes' bowling appears to be a mistake; the story, with a slight variation, is probably true of William Lambert. For full particulars see the 'Badminton Magazine,' December 1895, pp. 693, 694.—EDITOR.

wave, as he comes cheerily pounding down to the wicket. Then, too, he has such a satisfactory manner of rooting the middle stump clean out of the ground; and his flashing smile as he says to the retiring batsman in his amiable way, 'Sorry, sir!' must surely be some consolation for the woe of being 'out.' Richardson does not seem to mind being hit for any number of fours; he just stands at the wicket, his hands on his sides, watching the speeding ball with grand good temper. And he is sure to have his revenge a little while after.

Hugh Trumble is a very different type from Richardson. I can still remember clearly the Australian's tall, curved figure, with the stoop in his shoulders, as if his height was rather too much for him; the long sagacious face, and his sort of hesitating run to the wickets.

Cricketers, like other people, differ in many ways, but on one point they are alike: if they play the game in the right spirit, they are all optimists. Cricket calls for enthusiasm, and enthusiasm does not go hand in hand with gloomy views on things in general.

The cricketer's philosophy is very wise and simple. When he is losing he says to himself, 'It is only a game;' but when he is winning he cries exultingly, 'This is life, this is pleasure!' And so he gets the sweet without the bitter.

Some of this joyous enthusiasm is shared by the spectators; and though girls are debarred from actively playing the game, those who can thrill with the exhilaration of a grand drive over the ropes know something of what the batsman feels.

It is true that a foreigner might think he had come suddenly on a group of mourners standing round a tomb if he saw the crowd who solemnly line the ropes and gaze at the pitch between the innings. But this is only a surface impression. There is no more cheerful being than the typical cricketer. If I meet an unusually contented-looking and ruddy-faced old man, I say to myself, 'That must be a retired pro.'

A cricketer I have never seen is Mr. A. E. Stoddart; but I once saw a photograph of the Middlesex team, in which Stoddart was sitting cuddling a small tabby kitten on his arm. It was pretty to see the little creature lying so confidently in his strong hands; he had one finger under the kitten's chin to hold its small face up to be taken. I know nothing about Mr. Stoddart except that he is a great batsman, but I am sure he must be nice; and when I see him I shall remember, as I clap 'a swipe for six,' his kindness to a kitten.

THE BOLAS

BY R. B. CUNNINGHAME GRAHAM

'THEY have certain balls of stone' (says Hulderico Schmidel in his 'Historia y Descubrimiento del Rio de la Plata y Paraguay') 'tied to a long string like to our chain shot; they throw them at the legs of the horses (or of the deer when they hunt), which brings them to the ground, and with these bolas they killed our Captain and the above referred to gentlemen.'

This happened in the year 1585, when the Flemish soldier Hulderico Schmidel fought with the troops of Pedro de Mendoza against the Indians called Querandis, on what is now the site of Buenos Ayres. The captain slain was Diego de Mendoza, brother to the general of the expedition; the 'above referred to gentlemen' figure but as 'los seis Hidalgos.' And thus is chronicled the first description of the 'bolas,' destined since then to bring down to the ground many a good horse and stag, and even crush the skulls of captains and hidalgos not a few.

Confined entirely to the south of South America, the bolas, like the boomerang, seems to have been unknown to any tribe of savages apart from its inventors. It grew, like other national

weapons, from the conditions of the life and country whence it sprang.

The Indians of South America before the Conquest had no horses, so, living on great plains, game must have been most difficult to approach, and when approached consisted chiefly of deer, guanacos, and of ostriches—all animals certain to escape (upon a plain) if slightly wounded by an arrow. Thus an invention like the bolas, which if it touched the legs was certain to entangle, was valuable, as, thrown by a strong arm, it could be used almost as far off as an arrow, was much more easily recovered after a miss, and ten times easier to make. Schmidel describes the weapon accurately when he refers to it as 'three balls of stone fastened together by a cord after the fashion of our chain shot.' Therefore, it will be seen that the bolas known (for euphony and other reasons) as 'las boleadoras' in the River Plate stands in the same relation to the lazo as the rifle stands to the ordinary gun.

Such as it is, no Indian, Gaucho, or any self-respecting countryman from Sandy Point to Paraguay, or from the Banda Oriental to Coronel, ever stirs out without at least one pair, either wound round his waist or placed under the 'cojinillo'[1] of his saddle, ready to throw at ostriches, at deer, guanacos, or at the horse of some new comer to the country which has escaped and scours the plain, the stirrups dangling to the accompaniment of shouts of 'Yá se vá el caballo del Inglés.' Sometimes it serves to fight with at a 'pulperia,'[2] when the inevitable gin-born discussion as to the merits of the 'Blancos'[3] and the 'Colorados' waxes hot.

Bolas for general use are made of two stones about the size and weight of billiard balls, and of another about half the size and egg-shaped. All three are shrunk into bags of hide known to the Gaucho as 'retobas.' Each ball is fastened to a string of twisted hide about the thickness of a pencil, and three feet in length. The three are fastened in the middle like a Manxman's legs, so that the length from the hand ball to the two large balls

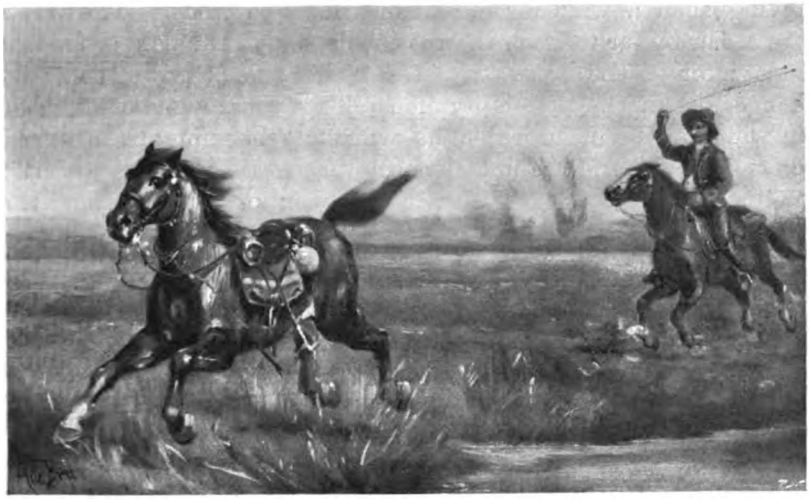
[1] 'Cojinillo,' literally cushion, is the sheepskin or mat of twisted goat's hair, which is placed over the framework of the 'recado' (South American saddle); over the cojinillo is placed a piece of leather called a 'sobre puesto,' and the whole is kept in place by a strong hide sircingle, known as the 'sobre-cincha.'

[2] Pulperia is a country store where everything is sold, and where sardines, figs, bread, raisins, and 'vino seco' or 'Carlon,' with square-faced gin, comprise the menu. The bar is defended by a strong grating, and the 'pulpero' stands behind with his revolver and a pile of empty bottles ready for what may happen.

[3] 'Blancos' and 'Colorados' are the Ins and Outs, and they are as hard to distinguish as are two black stones, or as the obsolescent political protoplasms known as Whigs and Tories.

does not exceed six feet, and the whole weight is not above a pound. For horses, wooden balls are used, and to catch ostriches, little balls of lead not larger than a pigeon's egg, fastened to strings of rather greater length than those I have described.

The Indians in the south of Patagonia sometimes use a bola made of a single string and with a ball attached, with which they strike and kill wild animals, as pumas, jaguars, and guanacos. The instrument is called 'bola perdida,' and, of course, cannot be used to take an animal alive, as it does not entangle but merely stuns the animal it strikes. At other times they use a single string with but a single bola and a hand ball, as being easier to throw,



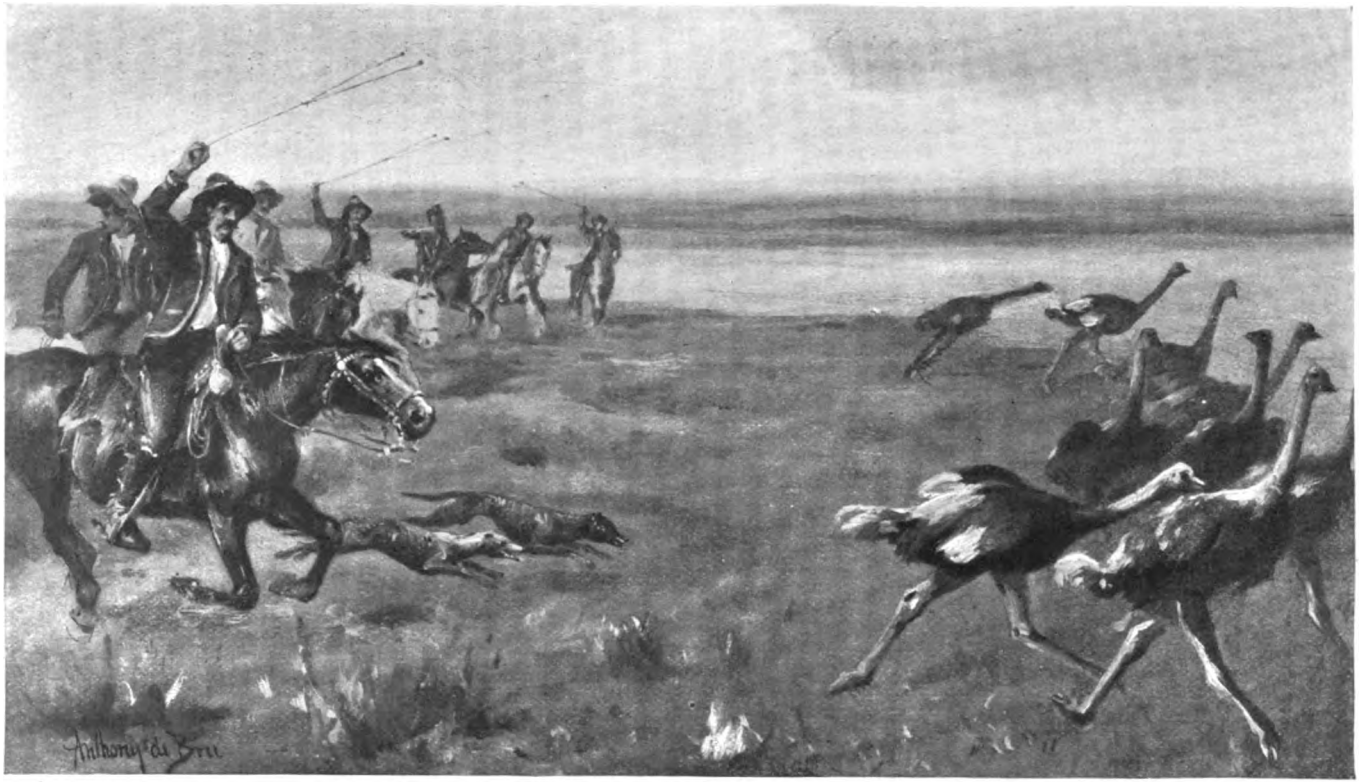
READY TO THROW AT THE HORSE OF SOME NEW COMER TO THE COUNTRY WHICH HAS ESCAPED

lighter to carry, and much easier to make, but it does not wind round the legs so firmly as do the bolas of the common shape. To throw the bolas, they are whirled round the head and circle through the air with the two heavier balls close beside one another, and when launched turn round and round on their own axis in their flight, and break in like a 'twister' from the leg side, and if the strings strike on the legs of any animal, the motion of the bolas being stopped, the balls wind round and round and tie the animal as firmly as would a pair of hobbles. The heavier kind may (on a good horse) be thrown from fifty to seventy yards, the balls for ostriches nearly one hundred, and the single 'bola perdida' a hundred and twenty yards and even more,

according to the strength of the man throwing and the speed at which the cast is made. On foot, as with the lazo, much of the power is lost, though as a general rule the throw is made more accurately. When thrown the bolas are extremely hard to get away from, and the best plan is to run towards the thrower and lie down flat upon the ground. If the man thrown at tries to run away his chance is small, and even if armed with a revolver the odds are much in favour of the 'boleador,' especially if he has several pairs of bolas, as, at the distance of fifty to sixty yards, the pistol rarely does damage if the object at which the shooter aims is moving rapidly about; the fact of motion is of no consequence to the man who throws the 'balls,' their length giving such a wide margin upon which to work. The bolas are easier by far to learn than is the lazo, and the danger far less great; for as the bolas leave the hand when thrown, the only danger lies in the possibility of catching your own horse's legs, in which case it is probable he will start bucking 'fit to knock down a town,' and the unlucky thrower get a violent fall and rise to find his horse either with a leg broken, or else scouring the plain with his new saddle, and himself afoot.

An average horseman and a cricket-player should learn the bolas in three months' practice, though to excel (as with the lazo) the 'boleador' must have begun as a mere child, and have 'balled' and 'lazoed' chickens, cats, and dogs in order to acquire the skill of hand the natives of the Pampas enjoy with both. Such is the weapon (well greased with mutton fat) with which the Gaucho and the Indian fight, catch wild horses, deer, and ostriches, and with which his forefathers caught the horses of the soldiers of Don Pedro de Mendoza, and his grandfathers, the artillerymen of the unlucky expedition under General Whitelock, the flags of which still hang in Buenos Ayres in the Cathedral aisle.

In the vast territory of the Southern Pampa, which stretches from Bahia Blanca to Sandy Point, and from Puan to Nahuelhuapi, in the green plains that stretch from Buenos Ayres to the Sierra de Vulcan, upon the park-like prairies of Entre Rios, and the vast rolling steppes of Rio Grande, and again amongst the apple forests of the Andes, the bolas are the chief pleasure, weapon, and plaything of the wild, solitary Gaucho, whose habits, speech, and mode of life Azara first made known to the futile world which reads and writes, and thinks because it reads it knows, and to whose eyes the Pampa with its signs, its lore, its disappearing customs, its low horizons, flat-topped ombús, rivers



UP AGAINST THE MARGIN OF A STREAM

and wastes, Guadal [1] and Biscacheras,[2] its flocks of ostriches, its cattle without number, herds of wild horses, whirling tero-teros, and its lone ranches, is a closed book. Nothing so pleasant in this machine-rid world as to bestride a half-tamed horse upon the Southern Pampas, and, well armed with several pairs of ostrich bolas, accompanied by two good greyhounds, to go upon the 'boleada'—that is, to start out ostrich hunting with several well-tried friends, and with a 'caballada' from which to take a fresh mount when the horse ridden tires. The Patagonian ostrich (*Rhea Americana*) frequents the stony uplands which so fascinated Darwin, and of which he said that all the wealth of vegetation of the tropics had not made so deep a mark upon his mind as the wild plains, the solitary huts, the lonely camp fires where the dogs kept watch, the horses eating, tied with their green-hide ropes, and he lay smoking, wrapped in his poncho, looking at the stars. Whether in Patagonia, or on the rolling plains of brown and waving grass which stretch from the Romero Grande to Tandil, the ostrich goes in flocks ranging from ten or twelve up to a hundred or even more. Scudding across the plains before the wind, their wings spread out to catch the breeze, it takes a well-tried horse, with his utmost efforts, after a gallop of several miles, to bring a man within a bola's cast. The hunters range themselves in a formation like a fan, and try to join the outside edges of their ranks and get the ostriches into a circle, or else to force them into marshy ground on which they cannot run, or up against the margin of a stream, edge of a wood, or border of a precipice. Sometimes the birds scatter and break up into groups, and then the horsemen, whirling their bolas round their heads, bound over stones, rush through the mia-mia, thread through the scrub, and, with wild cries, incite their horses and their greyhounds to full speed. Ponchos stream in the wind, hair flutters, silver spurs rattle upon the raw hide girths, and now and then a horse, stepping into a 'cangrejal,'[3] rolls like a rabbit, its rider seldom failing to alight 'parado'—that is, on his feet—and, holding the long reins or halter in his hand, to rise before his horse, and mounting, when it regains its legs, straight to resume the chase.

To go upon the 'boleada' is the chief ambition of every Gaucho of the south, and so that he can make enough to keep

[1] 'Guadal' is a marshy tract of ground; the word comes from the Arabic 'guahal,' mud.

[2] Biscachera; the biscacho is an animal somewhat resembling the prairie dog of North America.

[3] 'Cangrejal' is a piece of ground undermined by land crabs (*cangrejos*).

him in cigars and gin, to buy a new silk handkerchief or poncho now and then, no chance that he will hire himself for any settled work. Yet many of the 'boleadores' die at their trade, either at the hands of Indians, by hunger or by thirst, or, failing to alight 'parado' after a heavy fall, are left on foot with a limb broken, to die alone amidst the ocean of brown grass, from which no man left wounded, without a horse, escapes alive. Most of the frontier soldiers who, in the last two generations, themselves half Indians, have forced the Indians back into the wild valleys of the Cordillera of the Andes, have been 'boleadores.'

The couriers, who used to ride from Bahia Blancas to Patagonia, passing the Rio Colorado, and getting across the

LYING DEAD ON HIS EXHAUSTED HORSE

'travesia' as best they might, all learned their desert lore in the pursuit of ostriches. Perhaps Bahia Blanca was the centre of the 'bolas.' Game was abundant, cattle mostly wild, Indians swept often in their 'malones'[1] over the settled lands, and the wild people known as 'Badilleros' had a deep-rooted and most logical objection to all continued work. Even the lazo was too troublesome, and so they lived even less comfortably than did the Indians, raising no crops, shivering in wretched mud and straw-thatched huts, with a horse hide for the door, eating no bread, and with a saddled horse tied night and day outside the house. Their conversation was all of horses, brands, fights with

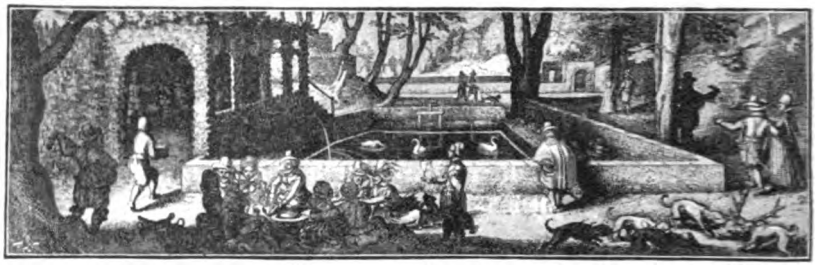
[1] 'Malon' was the word used by the Gauchos for an Indian raid.

the Indians, feats with the 'bolas;' of such a one who, on his journey to some place, was set on by the 'infidel,' and crossed the Rio Colorado with a pair of bolas on his horse's legs; of such another who, carrying the mails, lost the road, and was discovered lying dead on his exhausted horse, his last act having been to hang the mail-bag on a tree.

Such as they were, a hardy race—now passed, or passing fast, into oblivion—more savage than the Arabs, only a step advanced beyond the Indians; tall, lean, long-haired, hospitable, and thievish, abstemious as Icelanders, and yet as very gluttons as an Apache at a dog feast; born almost on their horses, sitting them like centaurs, living amongst them, talking and thinking but of them, and shying when they shied, as they had been one flesh. I see them, as I saw them years ago, out on the 'boleada,' riding towards some 'pingo'[1] paradise, twisting 'las tres Marias'[2] round their heads, bent just a little sideways in the saddle, as, at full speed, they plunged through the pajonales, flitted across the stony wastes, sped through the oceans of brown grass, and disappeared out on the Pampa as a ship slowly sinks into the shadow of the world upon the sea.

[1] 'Pingo' is the Gaucho word of praise and endearment applied to a fine horse.

[2] 'Las tres Marias,' *i.e.* the 'Three Marys,' a euphuism for the 'Bolas.' It is also used for the three bright stars in Orion.



BICYCLING IN BARBADOS

BY SUSAN, COUNTESS OF MALMESBURY

CERTAINLY when we left England, intending to escape the horrors of an English winter and to remain seven weeks at sea, paying flying visits only to as many of the West Indian Islands as time and the leisurely habits of the Royal Mail Company would permit, I never thought to find myself mounted on a bicycle, careering along the beautiful coral roads of Barbados, enjoying the north-easterly trade wind, which tempers the heat and keeps one alive, like a fish in a stream of running water, in these tropical climates.

At several of the islands where we landed, notably St. Thomas and St. Lucia, we saw in the evenings a number of dusky cyclists, male and female, the latter very smart indeed, with wonderful hats perched on impossible coiffures, mounted on American machines, riding very high and at a tremendous pace through the only level highways of these towns. Rational dress is at a discount among the lady riders, and I am told the creole feeling is so strong on the subject that anyone who dared to wear such a costume would be cut by all her acquaintance.

As soon as the sun gets low the roads are encumbered with tiny children of all colours, from the absolutely black up to the undoubtedly white. Mounted on diminutive bikes, or sitting, clothed in one short garment, playing marbles in the middle of the gangway, they thoroughly enjoy an existence which is as near to Nature as it is possible for human life to be.

But Barbados is the island of all others for the cyclist, as it is flat and the roads are excellent, while the climate is not so enervating as in some of the others. I hired an American

machine at what is called here the 'Bonanza' price of twelve dollars a month—twice what I should have given at home; but I was a stranger. The only possible hours for riding are between six and eight in the morning and half-past four to seven in the evening, by which time it is dark in these equatorial regions. It is, of course, delightful to ride by moonlight, as the nights are almost as bright as the days. At these times the coloured population never goes to bed, but dances and sprawls about the roads, so that naturally it is not much disposed for sustained exertion during the remaining twelve working hours. The wind usually blows only from the north-east, so it is easy to avoid facing

THE CRANE HOTEL, FROM THE BEACH

it, if this be desired; but as a rule everything is done with a view to obtain the relief and refreshment it affords and to catch every breath as it blows.

We started one day at four o'clock to ride the eight miles which intervene between Government House and a well-known sugar estate, which I will call Monkey-land. The air was cool, and a little breeze on our quarter did not much impede the way of our machines. The roads, which are naturally of coral in this coral island, are rather dusty, but not so bad as in some of our English country districts, where the dust lies inches thick and flies about in whirlwinds. Our way took us along by the sea,

which is fringed to its verge by manchineal and palms, the water being a peculiarly transparent greenish blue, and the sands, where the coast is not rocky, a very light yellow. The road itself is mostly bordered by low aloe hedges, while hibiscus shrubs and crotons brighten the gardens of every wooden hut (and there are many, for Barbados is thickly populated) planted by the wayside.

These little dwellings consist of a square erection, partitioned into two, and open in front to the blessed airs of heaven, as also to the gaze of the passer-by. They are simply and innocently constructed of wooden laths, and perched on four large white foundation-stones, one at each corner. Need I say that when a hurricane pays a flying visit to the district, the temptation these houses offer to its somewhat hasty disposition is too strong to be resisted, and four or five hundred of them are sometimes carried off as a practical joke, to be deposited on someone else's private property. The intelligent reader will not need to be told that the inhabitants are not always able to avoid personal collision with their own and other people's goods, and in 1891 a large number succumbed to their injuries or were buried in the ruins of their own villages.

All along the road we met West Indians, as they prefer to be called, dark of skin and white of dress, erect, as far as the women were concerned, barefoot and short-skirted, and with burdens on their heads, the habit of carrying which gives them quite a regal carriage. Their figures are really beautiful, formed both for strength and activity, and while young they have happy, round faces, with a charming expression of confiding good-nature, magnificent teeth, and a large smile which goes all round, as they say in America, and ties in a bow at the back! The men, who carry nothing, and, as a rule, do as little as they can, slouch along; but everyone alike tries to catch your eye as you pass, and having succeeded, says: 'Good fore-noon! God bless you, missis! God bless you.'[1] This is certainly more agreeable to the cyclist's feelings, particularly if a lady and alone, than the insulting guffaw of the English yokel, coupled with the jeering advice to 'go home and mind the babby!'

It is hot work, even during, so to speak, canonical hours, this cycling in the tropics, where the least exertion reduces the sufferer to a fluid condition and to the appearance of a confirmed scorcher in the exercise of her profession; but inaction in these climates produces even worse effects than with us, for every

[1] I am told that other ladies have had a less pleasant experience, and was strongly advised never to be out after dusk, unless escorted by a gentleman.

poison races in the blood, hurried by the heat out of its usual even flow.

We therefore took matters easily, and, putting our pride in our pockets, dismounted at the hills, which I am bound to admit were not severe. On the way we came to a little church, thoroughly English in architecture, but set in a graveyard of exotic appearance, with the air of rank overgrowth which characterises the vegetation in the tropics. We ascertained, without inquiry, from a variety of friendly and unoccupied persons only too anxious to waste their time on us, that this was Holetown, where the first English settlers had landed in 1605

BATHERS AT THE 'CRANE'

in the 'Olive.' They told us it was the 'most ancient' part of the island; and we proceeded on our road through endless sugar plantations, which the proprietors were just beginning to cut, and fields of sweet potatoes, quite the nastiest vegetable I have ever encountered.

On our left we passed, alas! the Leper Hospital, and to the right the Lunatic Asylum, both large and flourishing establishments, the sight of which saddened us in the midst of all this natural beauty. By this time we were very hot indeed, and presented an appearance not at all suitable for Hyde Park or a smart bicycle gymkhana; so it was with real joy that we saw in

the distance the beautiful mahogany wood which marks the entrance to Monkey-land, and knew that we were within a measurable distance of a kindly welcome, enlivened by tea and lemon squash. Shall I add, perhaps, also of orange bitters?

The mahogany copse, however, contained something so interesting and entrancing to our unaccustomed vision that we got off our machines as we turned in at the entrance-gate and softly walked along the shady road, all ears and eyes, keenly searching the branches of the highest trees. Yes! No! There is one! We were all excitement and anticipation. But at last there

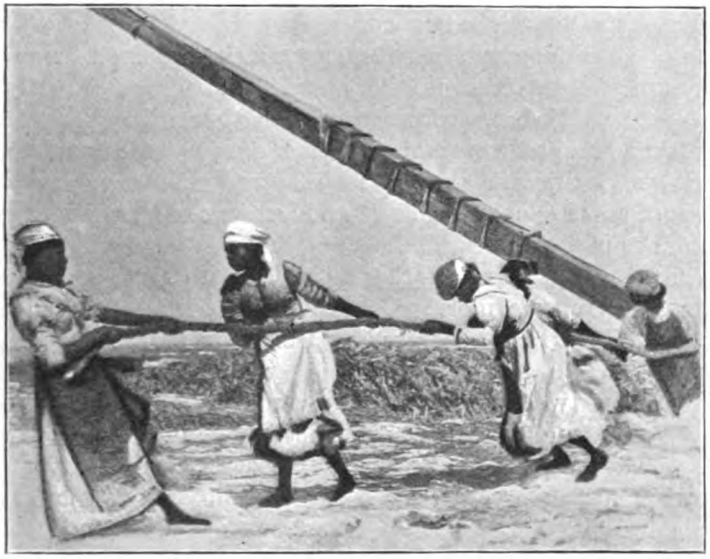
A TEAM OF MULES CARTING SUGAR

could be no more doubt; for there they were—real live wild monkeys; big ones, little ones, families, morose old bachelors, maiden aunts, mothers with twin babies in their arms. Some were in the trees, but many others were in the field close by, preparing to raid the canes, whence they had been driven by the cropping operations, only just begun.

These creatures are very handsome in their way, with furry, cream-coloured bodies, black heads and faces, and long tails tipped with orange. Soon afterwards we arrived at the house, which has a most delightful old-world air. It is like an English manor-house which has lost its way and settled in a foreign land, with strange tropical additions of banyan trees, 'cabbage' palms

(the Palma Real), frangipani trees, and cordias with their lovely brick-red blossoms.

We mounted, much exhausted, a few steps paved with red tiles, and entered a long low room with rafters, and open at each end, after the fashion of West Indian houses, to admit the breeze. The constant showers of rain permit tennis lawns to be kept in beautiful condition, though the grass is coarse and looks just like the sort that our dogs are fond of eating. Here we found a sett going on, played with great energy and enthusiasm by girls in white muslin and men in white drill. It was a pretty scene, and I



WOMEN HAULING AT THE SHAFT OF A WINDMILL FOR DRIVING A SUGAR-ENGINE

was told that the monkeys often come up from the wood and steal the fruit from the guava-trees close by.

Rested and refreshed, we were shown all over the building, in which the old manor-house idea is carried out to the letter, the upper story consisting of a rabbit-warren of rooms leading one out of another, and all deliciously cool, with low ceilings and steps leading up and down. Then we proceeded to see the sugar-boiling. I was astonished to find how cool the place was kept, with numbers of large coppers all bubbling at the same time, in which the cane juice gradually becomes brown sugar, of the sort known to us in England as 'Demerara,' but here called 'muscovado.'

The twilight is so short in Barbados that we had to tear ourselves away long before we had half enjoyed all we wanted to see. Back we wheeled, through the kingdom of the monkeys, on to the hard white coral road, and soon, as we were pedalling easily along, the night fell suddenly, and we had to stop to light our lamps. In this we were 'prevented,' both in its scriptural and in its ordinary sense, by a ragged but cheerful little person; and right glad we were to get rid of his good-humoured meddlesomeness—a difficult thing to do without being rough with him. We accomplished this at last by giving him a few of our matches, which he called 'frictions.'

The little houses along our route were all lighted up, and being open to our view, looked more romantic than I fancy they really are at close quarters. The dark hands and feet and faces, light dresses, flashing white teeth, together with the incessant chatter and laughter of their inmates, gave us a curious feeling of life in a different world, and of watching through a chink beings of another sphere, happy and irresponsible, sporting in the cool dark air.

Another day we took the Crane Estate for our goal, and started early in the morning, as soon as it was light, to ride the thirteen miles which separated us from our breakfast at the inn there.

The first two miles are steadily uphill; but we were fresh after a good night's rest, the air cool and invigorating, and the dust laid by the heavy dew. All the world wakes early here, so we had plenty of company. We met, among others, a lady of the people carrying her pigs to market, one under each arm. Had Paddy thought of this manner of circumventing the 'gentleman that pays the rent,' he need not have condescended to a deception. Another way of carrying your pigs is to tie their fore and hind feet together, and to wear them as a necklace round your neck. Teams of mules, mostly of six or eight, were carting sugar, and one vehicle I saw with a four-in-hand of admirable donkeys. We sped along past the usual sugar plantations, varied by fields of maize and sour-grass. Here and there were plots of sweet potatoes and of eddoes, a curious vegetable, like an artichoke in taste, but with a leaf resembling an arum lily. By degrees the country became wilder and more rocky; finally, still on the best of roads, we saw the sea ahead of us, and shortly after reached our destination.

No words of mine could paint the beauty of this spot. Perched on the verge of the cliff, which rises here seventy or eighty

feet perpendicularly above the waves, it is swept by all the winds of heaven. The water is of that brilliant greenish blue sometimes seen in the plumage of tropical birds, unlike any other colour I ever saw, and here and there the rocks below give it a purple shadow. Standing on the edge and looking down, we saw in the clear waters at our feet all kinds of fish disporting themselves, as if in an aquarium. Garfish, bright blue and green, springing out of the water after their prey, a sort of little whitebait, and many unknown creatures, strange at least to me, with queer shapes and odd habits, showed plainly up against the sandy bottom. Out at sea there was a huge splash, which we believed to be a wave

A WEST INDIAN BOY

breaking on a reef, until we saw a dark round back appear above the water. It was a whale, and of the sort called here black fish, or the humpbacked whale, which produces rather superior whalebone. Poor fellow! We were not the only ones to see him, and he was killed, later on that very day, with his consort, travelling on past Bridgetown. I inquired about his size, and was told, 'Thirty barrels!' Here among the rocks on the sea-level—I cannot say beach—where the water caresses, but with a deadly embrace, the foot of the cliff, is a sort of cavern without a roof, which can be approached by steps from above, and where the weary cyclist, having first prudently cooled himself down, can stretch his limbs and let the waves deliciously run over them,

secure from sharks, which often come quite close in, the water being fairly deep. They can be seen plainly from the top of the cliff, as they turn wickedly on their sides, eyeing you, and longing just to taste a nice sweet, wholesome morsel, fresh from England.

In a little bay to the left the whole population turns out early in the morning and bathes, clad in innocency and in that costume which is so easy to make and so difficult to wear with grace. Away to our right were various fishermen: one stood on a rock, immovably watching his prey, like a heron, and casting over the shoals of fish below, with unerring aim, a net with an open bottom to it, which closes with a cord running through rings as it is drawn up. Another native gentleman, some way off, attired simply, with an eye to broad effect and a lordly contempt for detail, in a 'bowler' hat, occupied a precarious position on the edge of a high rock, and fished with a long line in the sea below.[1] Later in the day we saw three West Indian lads fishing for cat-fish, ugly humpbacked creatures, which they said were good to eat, but which did not look it. These boys had eaten, though sparingly, of the tree of knowledge, and were attired in what I might call an 'occasional' garment, of that spotlessly white cotton so pleasant to see on the very poorest in these climes. They sat on the brink of the cliff, with their legs and feet dangling over, and allowed the line to run between their prehensile great toe and its neighbour.

I could not see that they were catching much, but they were playing after a light-hearted fashion, grinning from ear to ear, and pushing each other about on the verge, apparently, of destruction, in a way which made one's blood run cold.

We lunched on chub, an excellent fish, rather like trout, and were not sorry afterwards to enjoy that siesta of which no one in the West Indies will consent to be defrauded.

One of our party, however, filled with a superfluity of energy, rode on five miles farther to Ragged Point and inspected the lighthouse there. He came back feeling rather snubbed, for the man in charge, on being asked at what time he lighted up, replied with some hauteur that he *exhibited* at six!

The sun was now setting behind a grove of cocoanut palms, and quite a fleet of fishing-boats were coming in. They had been out since daybreak after dolphins and flying fish, and had had a pretty good day. The latter are rather like herrings to

[1] The reason of this is, that if any of the weights of the net caught in a button, with the strength of the cast the fisherman would be hurled to certain destruction far down into the sea below.

eat, and are shaped for speed like a mackerel. They are of a brilliant iridescent blue, with transparent wings, large in size as compared with the body. The lower fork of the tail is much longer than the upper one, and with it they are supposed to guide themselves when in the air. We saw a dolphin, which is an ugly fish with a curious round lump on its head, as if it had intended to grow a horn like a rhinoceros, but had changed its mind. They turn all sorts of beautiful colours when first caught, but the one we saw had become a dull dark blue. I suppose it

A SHARK, SHOWING THE MOUTH WIDE OPEN

may have weighed thirty pounds, and the flying fish half a pound to a pound.

We now proceeded to dine, not only well, but wisely, in view of a long ride home, and afterwards searched about with a lamp on the grass outside, hoping to find some land crabs. Only one small individual presented himself, and he was of the hermit persuasion. He had occupied a snail-shell and was of a very warlike disposition, so we left him to his midnight meditations. Never shall I forget the beauty of the night as we started on our homeward journey. There was no moon, but the stars shone gloriously. 'Hullo!' said my companion in an unromantic voice, 'there's Sirius blazing away!' And so indeed he was, glowing and sparkling, first green and then red, in the heavens to our

right, while the gems in Orion's belt glittered overhead. Away to the left, the Plough, that old friend of our childhood, stood erect upon its tail, with the Pointers losing themselves in the sea on the horizon, where the Polestar lay.

All along the roadside grasshoppers about the size of large dragon-flies called incessantly, 'I am here, here, here! Are you there, there, there?' each to its mate, and the tiny whistling frogs sang their little *appoggiatura* in a loud bell-like voice until faint with exhaustion and the approach of dawn. Moths as big as sparrows flitted across our faces, and everywhere the coloured folk were bathing in the cool night air and dancing all their fill.

We sped along silently, but with hearts full of the glory of this lovely land, and I felt as I never had before the truth of these words:

'His works, which without knowledge are beheld but as through a veil; for if the heavens in the body of them do declare the glory of God to the eye, much more do they in the rule and decrees of them declare it to the understanding.'[1]

[1] *Filum Labyrinthi.*

ACROSS THE CHANNEL IN A FOUR-TONNER

BY MAUDE SPEED

It may interest those who love sailing in small yachts to hear of a short ten days' holiday taken in a cutter of four tons from the Solent to the French coast. The starting-place was Yarmouth, Isle of Wight; and the ship's crew consisted of the skipper (my husband), and the steward, cook, and A.B. (all represented by myself). Not a large party, but the less chance of mutiny and of having most of the crew desert at the first port, which I have known happen on larger yachts. Our boat, the 'Lerna,' is a cruiser pure and simple, absolutely and totally different in every respect from the little racing butterflies one sees flitting gracefully about the Solent, twisting and pirouetting round buoys, and skimming the waters almost as swiftly as the swallows. These pretty toys are mere racing machines, empty cases of cedar and lead, built with the sole object of gaining for their owner a long string of winning flags by the end of the season. No one thinks of living on board one of these, and they contain no furniture or fittings; but our little craft is not built with the object of outsailing all rivals, but for stability and comfort, and is fitted up from one end to the other with lockers and shelves, sleeping-bunks, a small swing table, two good cooking-stoves, a water-tank, a washing apparatus, and in fact everything to make her as comfortable a temporary home as is possible in such a small space. Her length is 28 ft. 6 in., her beam 6 ft. 9 in.; she has 3½ tons of lead, mostly on her keel, and draws 4 ft. 6 in. She has a deep well, which can be covered at night, or, in case of rain or heavy sea, with a sliding hatch—a great convenience, and I should advise no one to have a cruising boat built without it. So comfortable is

our small vessel that we have spent three months at a time on board her—on the occasion of a cruise to Holland and the Zuyder Zee—and never wished to dine ashore once, preferring our own snug little cabin to the foreign hotels and the clatter of the *table d'hôte*.

The question as to where we should go for our short holiday had been debated with due consideration and poring over charts. We have explored again and again Chichester Harbour—beloved by artists and wild-fowlers—and the Sussex ports, and have also gone westward to Poole Harbour, that enchanting little spot Lulworth Cove, and Weymouth; so we determined this time to go towards the south, if the glass held up and the weather looked settled, and have a look at Cherbourg. And certainly there is no way of spinning out a holiday like going to a foreign town; for with the difference of language and customs the change is so great that a few days across the Channel seem more important and diverting to look back upon than a month spent in home waters.

It was on a Monday evening that we got on board, ready for a start at daybreak; but when we looked out at 3 A.M., not a breath ruffled the calm surface of the waters, so we just dropped out of the harbour with the last of the ebb, past the silent and sleeping little town, from which there arose not so much of life and movement as a wreath of smoke in the still morning air, and having picked up our moorings outside, to be in readiness for the breeze when it came, turned in and went to roost again. At 8.30, when the bacon began to fizzle in the pan for breakfast, things were much the same; but at noon a light breeze sprang up--not the E. or N. one we had been whistling for, but W.S.W.—so, as the sails were all ready to set, and we had no wish to waste a day of our short time, we cast over our mooring buoy and beat down to the Needles. The wind was very light indeed outside, and as night fell it dropped almost to a dead calm. It is not often that one can have tea in perfect comfort on the cabin table out in the open Channel, but we could in this instance—first the crew and then the skipper, as usual when we are under way. We did not like the appearance of the sunset at all. In contradiction to the high glass, it looked thoroughly bad, and I said it reminded me of the colour of the sky on the evening of March 1, '97, which was followed by that terrific gale which wrought such havoc amongst the fine old trees all over England. The hills of the Isle of Wight are visible for thirty miles out at sea, and they were still showing high when darkness fell, and the splendid light at

St. Catherine's Point—6,000,000 candle-power, one of the finest on our coasts—came to cheer us with its revolving ray. In the early part of the night we each took a short sleep in turn, but about 1 A.M. the glass began to fall with a drop; dark clouds rolled up and obscured the moon, seeing which the skipper went aloft and unlaced the topsail, and as the breeze began to freshen at 3 A.M. the steward got the kettle boiling and served out to all hands a cup of strong Liebig with some cheese and biscuits. A very wise precaution it was, for shortly after this the rain came, the sea got up, and cooking was henceforth out of the question. By this time the dawn was breaking wild and grey; we had sunk St. Catherine's light, and after an interval of about two hours picked up that of Barfleur, being rather proud of seeing it twinkling over the line of horizon exactly where we expected it. It is 236 ft. high, and visible for twenty-two miles.

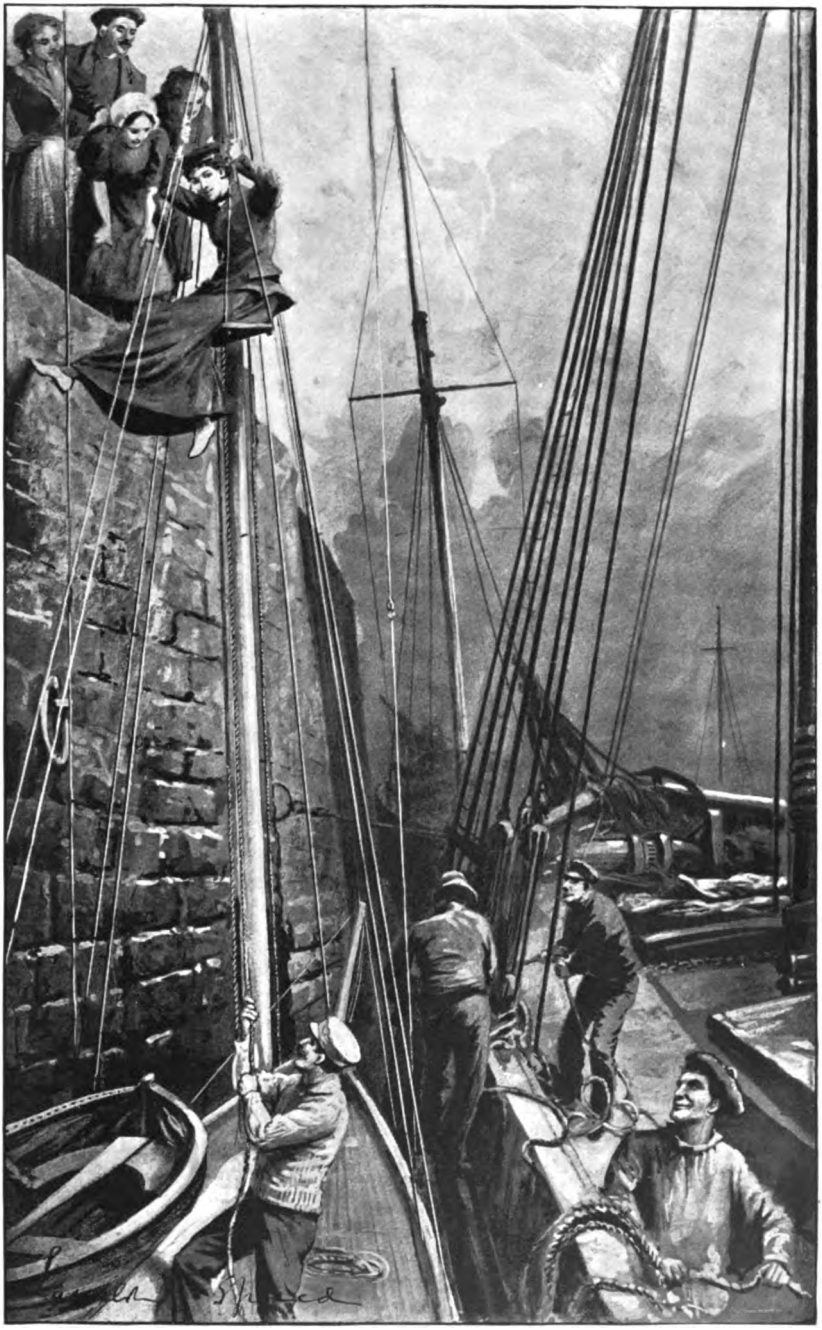
The wind continued to freshen, so we reefed the mainsail, and, as I began to feel very tired, I took off my oilskin and sou'wester and tried to have a nap on the lee bunk; but in one of the tremendous plunges the boat gave, the teapot took a flying leap from its shelf and landed on my forehead, leaving a memory of itself there for several days after in the shape of a large black bump. The skipper consoled me with the reflection that it was a good thing it had come down on me broadsides on and not bow first, or it might have marked me for life.

I soon gave up trying to rest in such a pandemonium. A small boat's cabin is so very lively in a heavy sea, cushions and kettles and things flying in all directions, no matter how secure you think you have made them; so I put on my oilskin again and went into the well, where I fished out of the provision locker some bread-and-butter and a tin of meat, and in spite of fatigue enjoyed the morning shower-bath of spray and salt water which was drenching the boat from stem to stern, and deluging the jib and foresail. So strong was the wind that one of the brass jib-sheet cleats was bent up and torn right out by the pressure on the sail, and we had rather a difficulty to belay the sheet afterwards.

We were by this time considerably to leeward of Cherbourg, and found that a strong tide (the tide-races on this coast are fearful) was carrying us up to the eastward, and that it would be a long and tedious business, when the tide slackened, to beat to windward again; so we studied the chart of Barfleur, into which we noticed some fishing-boats going, and seeing the entrance, though narrow, was easy and well marked, we eased off the sheets

and made for the row of black and red buoys which lead one to the quaint little harbour. A gale of wind was blowing by this time, the smacks and trawlers were running for port under the shortest of sails, and the rain was coming down in angry squalls. Very glad were we, therefore, to leave the turmoil outside, and rush between the stone piers into quiet and peace. On the right-hand pier an immense crucifix stands facing the mariner as he comes in, and behind it is the large and substantial church, on the very edge of the sea. A number of people, fishermen and others, collected in a little crowd to see us come in, as a small English yacht is an unusual visitor to this little port, once an important place, whence William Rufus and other of our Norman kings used to sail to and from England—centuries before the great town and harbour of Cherbourg existed. Many willing helpers ran to assist us in making fast to the quay, and we found a few English trading ketches shipping early potatoes for the London market. It was 11.30 before the sails were stowed, so we had been out for twenty-three hours.

While the skipper was getting things ship-shape on deck, I was busy with chamois and dusters below drying up the inevitable leaks which always will squeeze through the skylight, chain pipe, and other places in a wet thrash to windward, and reducing the general confusion to order. Meanwhile the kettle and frying-pan were on the stove, and a change of clothes and breakfast were very refreshing; still more so was the heavy sleep which followed it for two or three hours before landing to explore the town and send telegrams and cards to announce our safe arrival. We did not know at the time how welcome they would be to the recipients, as the gale had broken some hours earlier on the English coast than it did with us, and with still greater force, doing considerable damage to the shipping (wrecking Nelson's old flag-ship, the 'Foudroyant,' amongst others), and causing an anxious night on our behalf to those who knew we had started for France. Never was anything more deceiving than the conduct of the glass on this occasion in giving no warning of the approaching disturbance till it arrived, particularly as it was not a passing storm, but one of five days' duration, during the whole of which time we found it impossible to escape from Barfleur, and were thankful to be in such safe quarters. The only drawback to the harbour is that it completely dries out at low water, the rise and fall of the tide being so great. This, of course, entails much slacking up and making fast of the mast-head rope and others, and meant for us a disturbance in the middle of each



'MADAME N'A PAS PEUR'

night, as we took the ground soon after our arrival (at about 1 P.M.).

As at low tide our decks were about sixteen feet below the level of the quay, no ladder was procurable, and I could not climb the rigging, my mode of reaching the quay and descending from it again caused much amusement, for I was hauled up to the cross-trees in the boatswain's chair and swung myself out from the mast till a friendly hand gripped me and drew me to land. A knot of peasant women assembled on one occasion to see me swing down to the deck, and one said in a sympathetic manner to me: '*N'as-tu pas peur?*' '*Mais non,*' said another. '*Madame n'a pas peur; elle y est accoutumée!*'

We found the people most civil and obliging, and altogether did not regret our enforced sojourn amongst them. The shops were close to us and were well supplied, and we took many interesting walks, in spite of the bad weather, to the villages round, and out to the great lighthouse, off which the white waves were leaping and roaring in the race in a manner that looked anything but inviting. On Sunday the north cone was hoisted and the wind, blowing as strong as ever, shifted to the N.W. But we were in luck to be in Barfleur for this Sunday out of all the year, as it was their great *fête* day, when the annual Procession of the Host takes place through the streets. The church bell was going from 5 A.M. for services, and the Celebration of High Mass at 10.30 was most elaborate, and attended by crowds of devout worshippers, who had flocked in from all the surrounding villages for the occasion. The procession was to have taken place after the morning service, but owing to the high wind it had to be postponed till the afternoon. Every house was decorated with flags and white sheets, completely concealing the shop-windows; the streets were strewn with rushes and wild flowers, and three platforms which had been erected the day before were covered with carpet, the sides decked with evergreens, and an altar placed on each at the top of the steps, adorned with candles and flowers. On these the sacred emblem was to rest. In this little Norman town, far away from tourists and outsiders, the atmosphere of whole-hearted devotion and reverence which pervaded the entire crowd was very striking. All the townsmen and fishermen walked first in their best clothes and bare-headed; then came the priest in his vestments, carrying the Host under a white silk canopy, preceded and followed by priests and acolytes singing and swinging censers of incense; then came the women and girls, and finally the children. I have never seen anything

more picturesque and impressive than the whole crowd kneeling reverently with one accord whenever the priest stopped and carried the Host up to one of the temporary altars, where he held it up before the eyes of the people. It was finally taken back to the church, and deposited on the altar with great solemnity.

On the following morning the wind had abated and the sky looked clearer; so at about 11 A.M. we laid in a final stock of provisions, and, bidding farewell to Barfleur, sailed gaily out of the little harbour. Outside we found more wind, so lay-to and reefed; also shifted to a smaller jib, to be ready in case the breeze piped up again. But the weather improved as the day advanced, and we had a nice beat of about twenty miles to Cherbourg; in fact, before we arrived there the wind fell quite light, and we had to shake out the reef again and change back to the large jib. The fine expanse of water inside the shelter of the breakwater would afford a grand sailing ground for dingeys and small boats. We were some time after we entered the harbour sailing up to an anchorage near the town, and here we enjoyed the first night of undisturbed sleep since we started for our cruise. We spent a whole day in 'doing' Cherbourg. It is a fine town, but we thought a short visit to it went a long way, and were glad that our longer time had been spent in the less commonplace little port of Barfleur. We had lovely weather there, which we quite expected, as over the water in our own England guns were firing and bells ringing, and everyone was *en fête* for the great Jubilee of our Queen's sixty years of glorious reign. We flew our ensign all day, of course, and dressed the boat with her number, which was the utmost we could do in honour of the occasion.

The Cherbourg people were most enthusiastic over their new ship, a 'magnifique bateau-de-guerre,' that had just started to take part in the great Naval Review at Spithead. Nearly everyone we spoke to told us of her, and even the most intelligent people seemed to think she would be the feature of the whole show, and that nothing else would be worth looking at after her. Even Barfleur was ringing with her praises. Some fishermen who had seen her gave me a graphic description of her, but no adjectives at their command seemed strong enough to describe her magnificence. When a few days afterwards we found ourselves amongst the war giants of all nations, we saw the treasure of the French, and, I am afraid, were not quite so dumbfoundered with admiration for her as we expected to be.

A start for home was now imperative, so we arose the next morning betimes; in fact, when I lighted the lamp and awoke

SAILED GAILY OUT OF BARFLEUR

the skipper at 2.30 A.M., the stars were still shining, and darkness was reigning. Daylight soon came though, and by the time we had finished breakfast the sun shone forth in unclouded splendour; but we had to wait some time for the wind, which, to our delight, came at last from the east—just where we wanted it. We had by this time got the boat ready, and the Berthon dingey folded up and put upon deck, as she is not supposed to be towed in the open sea unless in the most settled weather; and during the latter part of our cruise over we had been considerably alarmed for her safety, so she was firmly secured on the port quarter. We got off at 6 A.M., sailed slowly down to the mouth of the harbour with very light air, but it freshened up when we passed out, and the day was henceforth made to order for us. We were under full canvas, but the topsail and whole mainsail were just as much as she could carry, and rather drove her, though she rode over the large Channel seas bravely, her fore-deck buried in foam, but very little being shipped aft. The course was ruled off on the chart, and our patent log set; so every two hours we hauled it in and marked off our position. There was a considerable haze all round, so we quickly lost sight of France, and it was many hours before we sighted the English coast. And then we found that the easterly-going tide had carried us a good deal to windward of our destination, and we had to ease off the sheets for the Needles, which we rounded against tide at 7 P.M., the white cliffs looking splendid in the evening light. The log showed the distance we had travelled to be seventy miles, and the time was thirteen hours. We dropped our anchor in Alum Bay for a well-earned night's rest.

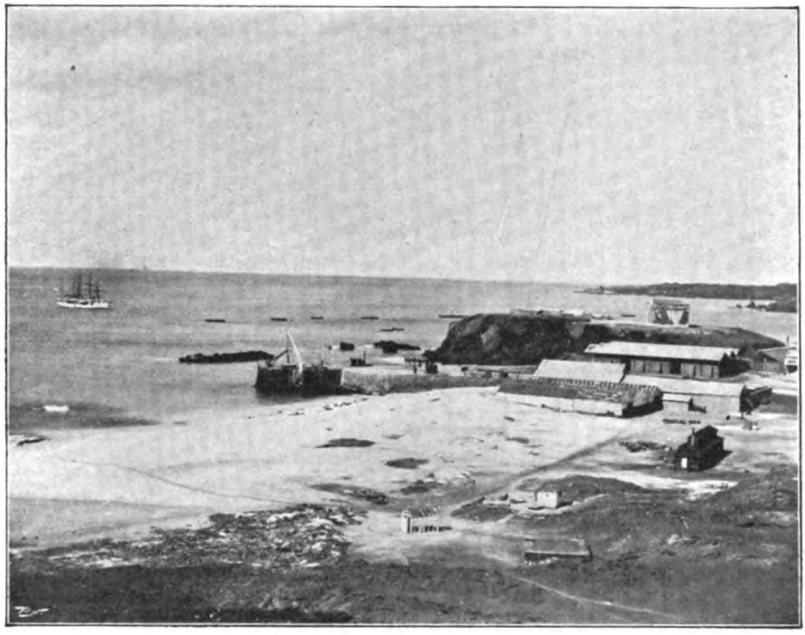
TURTLE-CATCHING AND FISHING AT ASCENSION

BY J. TATCHELL STUDLEY

THE Island of Ascension, situated in the South Atlantic, latitude 7° 55′ 55″, and 14° 25′ 5″ west longitude, in the very centre of the south-east trade winds, is used by our navy as a coaling station, and as a sanatorium for the crews of ships on the Cape station, and is especially of use to vessels cruising on the west coast of Africa.

It was early in March 1895 that I visited this island on one of H.M.'s gunboats, when a number of hands were down with fever, contracted during the troubles with the Brass chiefs. Here we remained nearly three weeks, and I amused myself by going to visit the various sights of the island, the two principal of these being 'Wide-awake Fair' and 'turtle-catching,' of which anon. The climate of Ascension is delightful, owing to the ever-blowing south-east trade wind. The sun pours down with almost tropical force on one's head, though a case of sun-stroke is rarely heard of, for the wind tempers the heat; hence it never occurred to me to wear any other than a small round cap, that gave little or no protection. The island itself is one huge heap of cinders, desolate-looking to a degree inland, but quite picturesque when viewed from the sea. Its one cultivated spot is Green Mountain, 2,820 feet high. On the summit of this mountain are a hospital and various houses—the former for such invalids as can stand the bracing change of air, and the latter for such officers and their wives as go there for a change from the

sultriness and glare of the garrison itself. Flies, at certain seasons, are an abominable nuisance in garrison, and literally smother everything in the shape of food. A friend was in the habit of placing a few lumps of sugar on his table, and when they were black with flies placed a tumbler over them; his marine servant would then enter and bear them off, with the aid of a sheet of paper slipped dexterously beneath the tumbler. A few mouthfuls of his twist tobacco was next blown in upon them, and their end was short but decisive. It seemed to me, however,



ISLE OF ASCENSION

that one would require an army of servants to keep the pests within bounds.

Everything on the island is done by the marines, who act as shepherds, builders, carpenters, butchers, &c. &c., and most successful they seem to be. The photographs from which the illustrations in this article are reproduced were taken by one of them. The spire of the church is said to be built entirely of old biscuit boxes and stucco. It answers admirably, and no one would suspect the materials of which it is composed. The mountain is ascended by a zigzag road that runs from base to summit, some six miles from the garrison. Cactus flourishes,

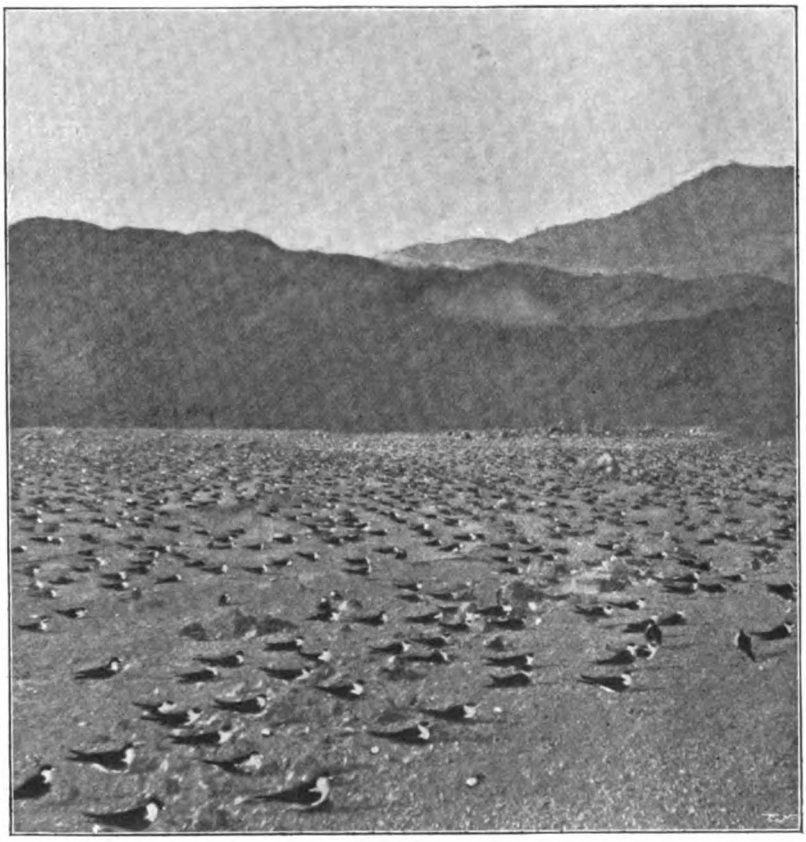
and many other sub-tropical plants. On the hill are numbers of birds and a fair quantity of rabbits; the latter take, however, a great deal of getting, the ground being extremely hard walking and the covert in places thick.

'Wide-awake Fair' is the sight of the island. It is visited by the sooty tern (*Sterna fuliginosa*) for breeding purposes. It is situated on the west side of the island, and is so named by the bluejackets, who go there to collect the eggs. No description that I can give could convey any approximate idea to those who have not seen this extraordinary sight, but the photograph here reproduced may help to do so. If you can imagine a fairly level valley some seven hundred yards long, and averaging one hundred yards in width, destitute of herbage, surrounded by small hillocks and mountains, literally swarming with birds sitting each on her one egg, some idea of the number may be estimated—thousands passing to and from the sea, thousands in the air, thousands on the ground. Such a sight is at first quite bewildering and makes one almost giddy, for the birds fly so near one's head that it would be easy to kill any number of them were one so disposed. The marines on the island visit the 'Fair' periodically during the season, and having pegged off a few square yards with sticks and string, proceed to smash all and every egg within the enclosed area. In a couple of days they revisit this space, and find a number of freshly laid eggs, which they take for food. The 'Fair' is the happy hunting-ground also of numerous wild cats—that is to say, of domestic animals which have run wild; and the amount of bleaching bird-bones lying about proves only too well what havoc has been played.

I walked right through the 'Fair' from end to end, and experienced some difficulty in avoiding the eggs, the birds only leaving them when absolutely compelled to do so or be trodden upon; and how they shrieked and screamed! From the Fair I walked to the top of the mountain across country, in the hope of seeing some of the so-called wild donkeys (the descendants of a domesticated stock) that are still on the island. In this, however, I was disappointed, though I had the opportunity of seeing, stabled in the garrison, one that had been caught and broken in. I was struck by the breeding he showed—coat short and sleek, fine clean legs, the markings most distinct, more like an Egyptian donkey than any of the best one is accustomed to see elsewhere.

I fancy everyone on the island imagined I was mad when I asked leave to spend a night at the turtle-turners' huts; but the journey more than repaid me. The two marines who are told off

to the west bay for the task had been instructed to expect me, and had brought some food of sorts which I had bought at the store in garrison, and when I turned up at dusk I found a comfortable repast ready, to which I did ample justice. We spent our time until the moon rose in smoking and yarning, I drawing them out, to discover all I could about the turtles. It was a night never to be forgotten—a full moon that gave enough light to read by, the



WIDE-AWAKE FAIR

air still and warm, and the everlasting wash of the surf on the beach. I was fairly lulled to sleep whilst lying on the sands just before daylight. At about eleven o'clock we started off to visit various sandy bays, but after our first round, which was fruitless, we lay on the sand watching the turtles in the clear sea. One would come nearly ashore, and then glide off again into deeper water. A round of visits an hour later was more productive, for

we found a turtle just coming up the beach, and she had got well above high-water mark, when we started to stalk her by lying flat on the sand and clawing ourselves along. Her head was fortunately away from us, while the wind blew towards us, so that we were enabled to get within touch of her, while she was unconscious of our near proximity. She set herself to work at once with a will to dig a nest, and used her fore paddles alternately to some purpose, sending clouds of sand to right and left of her, and into my face behind her. When she had formed an oval hole some two feet deep and of the shape of her body, she began to use her hind paddles to make a smaller perpendicular but much deeper one. It was curious to watch the action of these as she worked; no better description could be given, as I thought at the time, than to imagine oneself as I was, lying flat on one's face and endeavouring to dig a hole, say three feet deep, under one's nose with one's hands. This was just how she used her hind paddles, the extreme ends being curled up and dug into the sand with a scratching movement, to enable her to scoop up sand the more easily; the quaintest part of the operation being that as she placed a small load of sand down by her side with one paddle the other instantly gave a dexterous twist to the load previously dug up, that sent it flying in all directions. A turtle lays from 140 to 200 eggs, and before re-entering the water always covers them up. It seems that a certain amount of dampness is necessary for their incubation, and perhaps the heat of the sun is to some extent a factor in the operation; but I noticed that the sand at a depth of three feet was not appreciably warm to the touch even in midday. The young turtles are hatched in from twenty to thirty days, and after extricating themselves from their sandy bed at once make for the sea. They have, however, plenty of enemies then waiting for them, and the percentage of turtles that return to reproduce their species must be exceedingly small. When the process of laying is completed the men rush in, and, cutting off their retreat to the sea, turn them over on their backs. They are then helpless. This might appear an easy business, but seeing that a full-grown turtle may weigh anything between 400 and 600 lbs., a strong man must exert all his strength to turn one. In this operation one often has to use fin ropes. These are running nooses made on either end of a rope, one being placed on each fore paddle and pushed up close to the shoulder, the paddles being forced upwards and the rope tied across the shell. This places the turtle altogether *hors de combat*, and she may then be turned with ease. Having once got her on her back, you sway

her in a semicircle once or twice to form a sort of bed in which she reposes, and place a good-sized stone, with a piece of old cloth on it, under the back of her head, to keep her from bruising herself, and she is left for the present. One other precaution, however, is necessary. During the heat of the day a few old bags must be saturated with water and spread over the breast plates; they will then seldom hurt for one or two days, if circumstances necessitate their being left. On a conspicuous crag near the hut is a small flagstaff which can be seen from the garrison, and is used for signalling the number of turtles turned the previous

TURTLE-TURNER'S HUT

night and awaiting transference to the turtle ponds, their future home.

By the courtesy of the captain of the island I was allowed to go on the small tender, the 'Trincolo,' to watch the picking up. On their way to the west and east bays the men fished. Never have I seen anything like the sea-fishing to be obtained here! They catch 'cavallhoes,' albicore, and bonito; and when it is stated that we caught ninety-four of the former (many of them weighing 15 or 16 lbs. each and some more) the nature of the sport may be imagined. My fingers ached so much, and were so

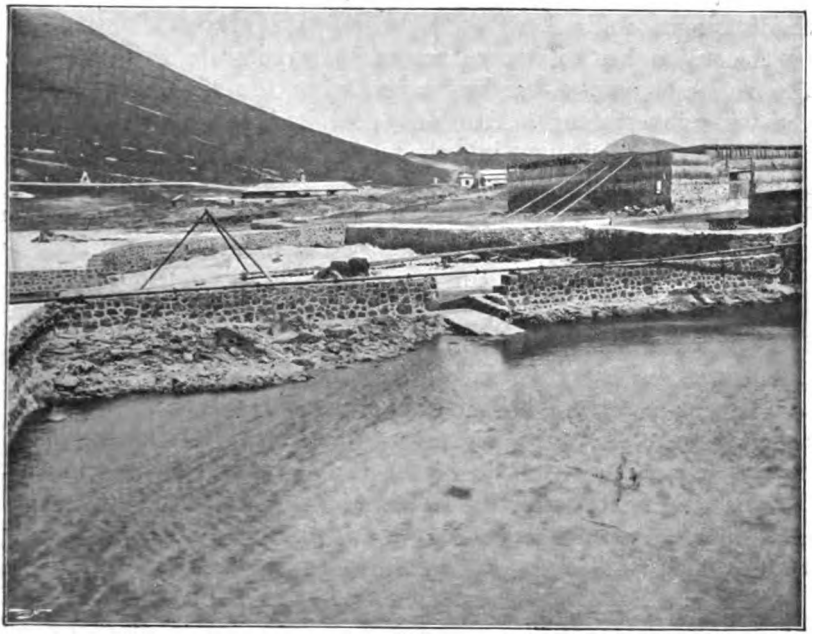
cut by hauling in the lines, that after hooking the fish I was glad to allow one of the Kroomen to haul them in, much to his delight.

Twice during this trip I had my line smashed and carried away, and twice I had my hooks straightened out by a bonito. They are a huge fish, and one has no chance to 'play' them, going (as we were) at the rate of six or seven knots through the water. The only bait needed is a bunch of white rag tied round the shank of the hook, with the ends torn into streamers; and the way they come at this bait is wonderful. But to return to the turtles. We have reached one of the bays, and having

TOP OF GREEN MOUNTAIN

dropped anchor at a safe distance the dingey is lowered, and with two hands in her she is backed as close as possible to the shore. The turners are provided with fin ropes, the same as used in turning, but with this difference: to the two ends that have previously been tied down tight on the back of the turtle is fixed a light line about twenty feet long, with a small wooden buoy attached, and the two nooses, fixed as in turning, tight up against the shoulders of her fore paddles. This having been done, she is sent to sea, and no doubt thinks she is going once more to the depths of the ocean; but we are waiting outside, and

directly the buoy puts in an appearance we pick it up with a boat hook and haul away until 'madame' comes blowing and splashing to the surface. The fin ropes are then got hold of, and she is drawn up as tight as may be, with her head and shoulders well out of water, and her back against the stern of the dingey, the fin ropes being made fast to the thwart. Two can be taken off in this way at one time, and when brought alongside the steamer they are hoisted on deck with the aid of a small derrick, and are once more deposited on their backs. From board ship they are transferred to turtle ponds prepared expressly for their reception,



THE TURTLE PONDS

and having a grated opening in the wall facing the sea, to admit fresh water at high tide. Here they are kept until wanted for killing. This is effected by one of the butchers. The turtle is slung up with a block by the hind paddles, head downwards, and the throat is then cut. Occasionally a few are sent home alive for presents to officials, but the greater number go into the pot for soup for the islanders and for H.M.'s ships that require them. I had been rather looking forward to this real turtle soup, having reminiscences of *tortue claire* in London; but I was rudely disappointed, for no one would ever recognise as turtle soup what is

turned out by a ship's cook. This, however, is a matter of taste. As to the eggs, the marines blow and dry a few annually, and send them home as curios and presents. They are quite soft and fresh, and quite spherical in shape, but are very brittle when dry. The young turtles are sometimes filled with red lead after being cleaned; they then make pretty paper weights when varnished. The shell of the Ascension turtle is of no use as an article of commerce; it is too soft, that of the hawk-billed turtle (*Chelonia squamata*), which is not edible, being preferred. The former is, however, sometimes cleaned and varnished and hung up as a trophy; but it is huge, ugly, and of no use, and hardly an ornament to a hall.

Ascension has one more remarkable visitor in the shape of the frigate or man-of-war bird, regarded as the strongest bird on the wing in existence. An idea prevails amongst sailors that should this bird once get into the water it is unable to rise from it. I myself saw one that had got partially immersed, and seemed to have the greatest difficulty in getting on the wing again. This convinced me that there is some truth in the story. It is a great robber, making the smaller gulls and terns disgorge from their crops the fish which they have so arduously worked for, and it is most dexterous in catching it in mid-air when its aggressiveness has been successful. It is a most graceful bird; and dozens may be seen skimming close to the waves, with others soaring in the cool air hundreds of yards up and almost out of sight. There is a wise rule of the island prohibiting guns being fired within a certain distance of the shore. This is done ostensibly to prevent the turtles from being alarmed, but I am glad to think it also applies to the birds.

Tropic birds (or boatswain birds) nest on a small rocky island named after them on the east coast. They are peculiar in that they make their nest in holes on the sides of this rock, the pair sitting on their one egg alongside one another, their heads inside the hole. Boobies, or gannets, also are so tame that they perch on the yards of the ships. It is a splendid sight to see them flying at a great pace and suddenly diving headlong into the sea.

There are single and double rollers at Ascension; when the latter are on all communication with the island is at once stopped, for it is not safe to land at the jetty; and even when single rollers are coming in it is necessary to dodge between them. Landing is then accomplished with some danger and difficulty, for a net has to be swung from the end of a crane, and in this one is ignominiously hoisted.

A HEAVY BAG

BY AMELIA M. BARKER

I WAS always fond of a gun, from the days when in short petticoats I was my father's companion whenever he shot alone, and I believe I always shall be, in spite of the incident that follows. From the time when a tiny single barrel loaded with a thimbleful of powder and shot instilled terror into the feathered bosom of the common sparrow, until my first sight of a grouse coming like a cannon-ball at my very head, apparently I have had a love of the sport, which I must acknowledge in spite of the fact that such a taste may be blamed as distinctly unfeminine. I fondly imagine I have only once made myself ridiculous with a gun—at least no one has dared to bring such a charge against me, which comes to the same thing as far as my vanity is concerned, and as long as that is not wounded, I can put up with a good deal! On this one occasion I did make myself ridiculous, I own it, and, of course, you will see that I did; but it is so long ago that I have got over my annoyance, and only see the fun of the thing. Then there was only one witness to my discomfiture; he benefited to the extent of half a crown by my misadventure, since when he has been my devoted slave, and I think never sees me with a gun without visions of untold wealth. Whether he fancies that one day he may be called upon to bury a body slain by my hand, for which the hush money will provide him with a comfortable income for life, I have not inquired. In fact, I rather avoid him; he grinned sardonically at a time when I felt I really was deserving of commiseration, and evidently took me for an object for his ribald mirth.

He did not assure me that I was not half so funny as I felt I

must have looked, as any other well-behaved man would; he did not soothe my wounded sportswomanly pride, and I feel a sort of grudge against him which I should not mind showing if I wasn't afraid he might tell.. It fell out in this way. It had poured the whole morning of the day when I had been promised I should go out shooting. Short of trying a chance of duck-flighting over the gravel sweep by the hall door, there did not seem much to do without a rod and line. The weather was bad, there was no denying it, but I regret to say my temper was worse, and when I saw the others start I should have cried if I hadn't—well no, I didn't do that *quite*. They said I had better not go because skirts get soaked, and to see them march off in triumph because they were not obliged to wear such on, was almost more than I could bear. Just as if I wanted to live in a sack, with the bottom out for choice! Hardly had their selfish backs been turned and the sound of their annoyingly hearty laughter died away, than my hand, which hung limply by my side with disappointment, was mumbled sympathetically and refrigerated unpleasantly by the open mouth and icy nose of Vixen. She is just as enthusiastic a sportswoman as I am; we are exactly alike about it, in fact, except that she has such a lovely nose, which I always envy, for she can tell to a nicety if a rabbit is there or not. I cannot always do this, and it is rather tiresome, if not actually humiliating, to be taken by surprise by a rabbit.

At first I was too thoroughly out of temper to take any notice, but when I subsided into an armchair, more like an irritated sack of potatoes than a human being, Vixen made up her mind that she would get an answer out of me somehow. On to my lap she bounded, wriggling all over, her tail, which is not the most conspicuous feature she has, owing to an unfortunate lack of symmetrical taste in the person who bit it off, was nearly invisible from the pace she wagged what is left of it, and when it was visible it looked like three, one in the middle and one at each side. She made little gentle nibbles at my chin, which was well forward from depression, and when that seemed unproductive of the desired result, whined and uttered a short bark or two of sheer impatience at my stupidity. This was her invariable procedure when she requested the pleasure of my company for a walk, and my faith in her wisdom, which I looked upon as second to that of no other dog in England, wavered. Couldn't the little idiot see it was a deluge—for she hated to wet her feet unnecessarily, and was as careful of her satin coat as any lady?

ON TO MY LAP SHE BOUNDED, WRIGGLING ALL OVER

A watery gleam of sunshine restored my confidence in Vixen. It had ceased raining, and she knew it. I went to the window and saw the stretch of the meadows beyond the park, the long tangled grass of autumn sparkling with the raindrops, and the coverts where the last leaves were shining with moisture. The tall trees seemed to be waving their arms and brushing the tears away, preparing to rejoice at the return of the sun. My ill-humour gradually gave way; if the improvement continued in the weather, there would be a corresponding one in me.

Vixen jumped on a chair by my side, and resting her paws on the sill, gazed out of the window, her polished nose working and leaving wet blurs on the pane as she pressed against it in her eagerness to catch sight of one or two of the rabbits that she well knew lived within the range of vision. My gun lay in the hall, and I was still in my shooting dress; I could always go down the fields and hedgerows, and take my chance of an outlying rabbit. The remaining sulks vanished as if by magic, and whistling to Vixen, who responded with a shriek, hardly less piercing, I took my gun, and slipping a few cartridges in a pocket, splashed out of the hall door.

My courage would have failed me then, I think, had it not been for Vixen. It was wet enough underfoot to have prevented Noah leaving the Ark, if he had not been shut up there till he preferred anything to being dry; but I had not the heart to disappoint her, though it did not look as if any sensible rabbit would venture aboveground. She stood with one paw in the air, quivering with excitement, and I felt I could not face her expression of utter dejection were I to turn back then. Of course she saw in a moment when my mind was made up, and dashed off into the long grass, bounding and leaping through it, only stopping now and then to shake off the wet when it got unpleasantly near to her ears, of which she was ever careful.

Vixen tried to pretend once or twice that she smelt rabbit, but I am sure it was only by way of encouraging me, and for fear I should turn home if she failed to show me some sport. She was an eminently truthful dog, but there can be no doubt she told a fib or two that day, and I think, also, that they were of the meanest sort, being entirely to further her own ends. There could be no possible chance in the open, but in the hedgerows there were so many holes into which I had seen the dog half bury herself, that there was still faint hope of a shot.

She and I strolled along, passing on our way a man trimming the thorns; so on to the lower meadows, and the little spinneys

where were the happy hunting grounds that seemed our last chance. The cattle were beginning to feed again, and so were the horses, perhaps the rabbits might do so too.

There was the strangest crew of horses in that field; I noticed them idly as I walked with a sort of half wonder at any farmer owning such curious beasts. There was a white one with a most terrible tail, bare, shiny, and with joints in it that one could see; the creature was also apparently a prey to St. Vitus' dance, so restlessly and incessantly did it jerk, swing, and tremble. There were several others too, some with the wildest profusion of mane and tail, some piebald, a spotted thing that made me shudder when I caught sight of a hideous flesh-coloured rim round each eye, which gave it a diabolical air in conjunction with the pale blue of the eye itself. It might have been the modern type of the original nightmare, if that uncomfortable delusion ever had derived its name from a freak in the equine breed. But the animal that most attracted my attention was a pale creature, somewhat the colour of undone buttered toast, with a melancholy gaze, and a hanging, dejected under lip. It was more the manner than the appearance of it that made me notice it. I have never seen a horse with such a peculiar disposition before or since. When it saw me it raised its heavy head, stared with indescribable wretchedness in its look, left off feeding, and to my dismay proceeded to follow me. Pace by pace did this appalling beast take in harmony with each movement of mine. If I had not had a gun in my hand, which is a protection, I think I should have been terrified; in fact, I am not quite sure I was not as it was. If I stopped he stopped, and when I went on so did he, always with the same cold eye fixed upon my every movement and the same ineffable dejection. Is it possible for a horse to go suddenly mad, I wondered, and if so, does mania take the form of melancholy? It did not seem to instil terror into Vixen's breast, which gave me a little comfort—for animals are so quick to detect anything abnormal—and by degrees I forgot my silent witness.

Vixen, quite heedless of the pale-complexioned satellite, crammed her little body dutifully into every burrow, snuffling and blowing down each one in turn until one fancied she must have blown the rabbits out at the end if there were any at home. At last, with a yell of delight, away sprang the dog on the heels of a rabbit, up went my gun, there was a scuffle and a scramble, then a blaze—and the rabbit went on with an insolent whisk of the tail absolutely unscathed; it fled to a burrow, halfway down

THERE, JUST BY ME, STRETCHED ON THE WET GRASS, LAY THAT AWFUL HORSE

which Vixen's comely white body wedged itself in unavailing pursuit, leaving a busy tail and straining hindquarters visible, whilst she barked hoarse contempt of cowardice to the well-hidden prey.

I turned in disgust at my own inaptitude, trying to make excuses for myself, as everyone does when a failure occurs, and a sight met my horrified gaze that struck terror into my soul! There, just by me, stretched on the wet grass, lay that awful horse, prone, and apparently lifeless, his neck stretched out, his legs rigid, the under lip dropping more woefully than ever, and the melancholy eyes closed with a hideous semblance of death!

Horror seized me—had the shock of the gunshot, coming on an already enfeebled constitution, killed the miserable brute? It was not possible that I had shot him. A 20-bore is not a boomerang to describe a murderous circle, so that it *could* not be that. Had a sudden access of melancholy, which had evidently long marked the unlucky animal for its own, induced it to commit suicide at that identical moment, or how had this unfortunate tragedy occurred?

In the twinkling of an eye it burst upon me that I must call for assistance. I must explain what had happened to some one, or I might be imprisoned for the slaughter of an innocent horse.

I own that ignorance of what penalty I had incurred added to the painfulness of my position. It might be a heavy fine, and I had already spent my last quarter's allowance, whilst I felt that justice would not be put off with the promise of an instalment. Suddenly the recollection of the hedge-cutter flashed into my bewildered brain. Off I sped as fast as my legs would carry me, and as soon as I could articulate between my breathless panting gasps, confided my terrors to the gaping rustic.

'I have killed a horse, I'm afraid,' I faltered, unable for want of breath to enter into explanations there and then as I wished.

The stony-hearted individual gazed at me with an uncomplimentary grin. 'Not unlikely—sarves ye right; I don't hold with females and firearms,' was his reply.

Fury with his unsympathetic sarcasm almost brought tears to my eyes, but the moment was not one for waste of precious time. I ignored his unfeeling gibe, and inquired:

'What am I to do? quick!'

'Whose hoss be it?' he replied with exasperating coolness.

'How should I know? For goodness sake do something to help me! What *am* I to do?'

Another grin. Heavens! could this fiend get no further than to show me his toothless gums by way of consolation?

'Pay, I should say,' he muttered, turning back to his hedge-trimming, 'and don't go fooling about with a gun any more as long as you're a sinner. It's one of them circus hosses you've killed, I'll lay a farden, and they's valuable, you'll find.'

In one moment the whole situation lay before me clear as daylight. Here was the explanation in a nutshell—this horrible misleading animal had learnt to die in the circus at the sound of a gun, and had played the trick on me!

I grew crimson with rage and shame that I should have been so frightened, and made a fool of myself before the disagreeable, ungallant rustic, but I pressed half a crown into his horny palm, ran back to where I had left the disingenuous beast, and naturally found him gazing in comfort at me between the mouthfuls of grass, which I almost wished might choke him.

This is the story of the only time that I can honestly believe I made myself ridiculous with a gun. I have told you, and you must not tell another living soul!

THE TRUE STORY OF A DUCK-GUN

BY L. H. DE V. SHAW

It was a modern muzzle-loader, a thing we do not very often run across, although, no doubt, a large number of guns of this antiquated build are still turned out by various firms. On the particular gun with which I am dealing appeared the name of a leading London maker. It was a single 4-bore, well finished and richly engraved. The barrel, English Damascus, measured thirty-four inches; the gun weighed a little over fifteen pounds. It would have made a rare ducker for those happy folk who are able to find fowl thick enough to warrant the discharge of four ounces or so of shot; while, again, it was just the kind of gun for which the average mortal generally loses an affection after a very brief acquaintanceship.

Let people say what they like, large-bore shoulder-guns are always more or less a failure. When fowling without a punt-gun a 4-bore in the boat is a highly desirable weapon to fall back upon should thick shots offer themselves; but when bound for marsh or broad, and relying only upon a single gun, he is a wise man who leaves the big bore at home, and sallies forth with a substantial 12, or a 10 at the largest, under his arm. Most budding fowlers conceive an early ambition to own one of those miniature cannon. The bigger the better, they think—and so the 4-bore soon comes along. Disillusionment, however, follows with rapid stride. The fowler, armed with his new and mighty engine of slaughter, reaches his favourite ground. He finds it swarming with snipe. The only way, by-the-bye, to be quite sure of finding abundance of snipe is to go out with a 4-bore and a good supply of cartridges containing about four ounces of No. 1 shot. Besides the snipe, which rise all around him, lapwings and golden plover, never more than two or three at a time, and never less than ten

yards apart, persist in flying directly over his head, within easy range for a cylinder 20. There they are, the snipe and the plover; there, too, are the duck, and plenty of them. But they never allow themselves to come within hitting distance of that big gun. Duck never will. There is something about a 4-bore that they *can't* stand at any price. They rise from the dykes or rushes three hundred yards away; they come sailing by a quarter of a mile overhead. And that is all they ever think of doing! Our fowler at last grows reckless. After making quite sure that no one is looking on, he begins to pop at the smaller game. Success, of a certain kind, attends his efforts. When, arm-weary and somewhat dejected, he reaches home, and his bag is emptied, it discloses what was once a snipe, and what were once three or four golden plover, besides—I was almost forgetting to mention it—the remains of a widgeon, which came by him in the gathering gloom of flight time, and was curled up at a twenty yards range. A week afterwards that 4-bore is for sale—cheap.

But to proceed. The gun of this story fell into the hands of one whom we will call Smith. Smith, who now holds a commission in Her Majesty's service, lived in a small Norfolk village, near some of the best duck ground in England, and quite close to one of the most noted broads. How the gun came into his hands I do not know. It is doubtful whether any but his closest and most intimate friends knew that he owned such a weapon. As a rule, people do not talk much about the ownership of a big gun. Probably Smith had consigned his possession to the obscurity of some secret cupboard after a few scarcely satisfactory trials. Anyhow, no one ever saw him using it.

It came about that Smith left his native village.

Rather more than two years afterwards a brother of the writer—we will call him Jones—who lives in the next parish to that lately inhabited by Smith, answered an advertisement which stated that a fine duck-gun was to be disposed of for a modest sum. He was considerably surprised to receive a reply from his old acquaintance Smith, and the correspondence ended in buyer and seller coming to terms. Thus the duck-gun became located within a mile and a quarter of its old home.

But Jones had 'had some' in the matter of big guns. I have vivid recollections of seeing him staggering backwards under the recoil of a similar gun, while the object of his aim, a solitary lapwing, pursued its way unscathed. As a matter of fact Jones only bought the gun because it was dirt-cheap, and likely to yield

him a guinea or two if he could find the right buyer. Jones has an ineradicable instinct for dealing. If his income were five thousand a year, I believe he would still continue to drive to every sale which took place within twenty miles of his home, in the hope of buying for a shilling some article which he thought he might be able to sell again for one-and-twopence.

Jones had no trouble in finding a customer for the big gun. I will call the purchaser Robinson. Robinson lived in Smith's old parish; and the duck-gun found itself housed not more than three hundred yards from its original home. Strange, but true!

Robinson was delighted with his new acquisition. No gun could be in better condition. Wherever Smith had been in the habit of hiding it up, he had evidently not neglected the necessary periodical oiling. In spite of its weight it handled well, and seemed lighter than it really was. Robinson went to bed that night with the full determination of trying its powers at the very earliest opportunity.

The opportunity soon came. Robinson, with the lethal weapon over his shoulder, started early one morning for the boat, and had himself pulled up the Yare towards Rockland Broad. There was nothing about on the river; there was nothing about on the big dyke; there was nothing about on the broad when he got there—not even so much as a dabchick or a moorhen. Duck there were, no doubt, in the rushes. They will quack within twenty yards of you as you cruise about Rockland Broad, but seldom indeed can the best of dogs put them on the wing. Treacherous to a degree are those rush-grown tracts. Many a good dog has dashed in full of life and pluck, and never been seen again.

The day selected by Robinson seemed an off-day among all water-fowl and marsh birds. I could have told him exactly how it would be before ever he started with that big gun. The conditions could not have been more promising: a leaden sky, a wild, squally, bitter east wind such as generally puts everything on the move. But then a 4-bore gun never fails to smash up all prospects of sport within a radius of two or three miles.

Robinson varied matters by alternately walking the hassocks, and having himself pulled about the broad. The hassocks yielded nothing—nothing, that is, but snipe; snipe almost as tame as barndoor fowls. I could have told him how this would be too. He did not shoot at them.

And so the day passed by. Our sportsman buoyed himself up with the thought that flight-time might amply compensate him for previous disappointments. The Fates, however, willed

matters otherwise. As daylight waned, he took up a likely pitch. But not a duck did he see—not one single whistle of rushing wings did he hear. The Surlingham fowl stuck to their own broad; the down-river birds found other water whereon to light; the Rockland duck apparently never flighted at all. It was the 4-bore that did it.

When all reasonable expectations of sport were gone, the disappointed fowler gave the word to pull towards home. Though it had grown so dark that a bird would have been invisible at fifteen yards, he still kept the big gun in readiness. He sat in the stern, shivering, sorrowful, and dejected. No movement did he make till, aided by wind and tide, the boat was speeding merrily down the Yare.

The last hope seemed gone. Robinson bethought him of his charge—that charge which he had rammed home so gaily in the morning; that useless charge which had lain slumbering in his barrel the livelong day. It would serve no end to keep it there. He pointed at the zenith—and fired.

Robinson has never been able to give a quite coherent account of how it all happened. He seems to have experienced a sensation of being driven downwards with terrific force, and the same instant to have felt the big gun wrenched resistlessly from his half-frozen hands. There was a loud splash in the wake of the boat. Robinson had fired his first and last shot from the 4-bore.

Even now he is quite unable to appreciate the humorous side of the affair.

That big gun lies buried deep in the muddy bed of the Yare. Perhaps in future ages it may once more see the light of day, and be exhibited as a quaint relic of bygone times—may be held up to wonder as the rude contrivance of a darkened age. Who can tell?

WHAT STEAM YACHTS COST

BY H. L. REIACH

For many years the steam yacht has been increasing in popularity amongst yachtsmen. The advantages it possesses over sail are many to the business man, or the man whose time is not entirely at his own disposal; the mere fact of being able to locate oneself to within a few hours is a consideration which in itself is enough to outweigh the many arguments which have been put forward against it.

Arguments there are and always will be in favour of sail as the means of propulsion for yachts; it is clean, cheaper may be, requires a certain amount of experience and skill, and has that feeling which to so many yachtsmen *is* sailing. But, on the other hand, one is to a certain extent at the mercy of wind and tide; becalmed perhaps, or harbour-bound for days at a time, with head winds to contend against and many other things which on occasion prove extremely irritating. And, despite Kipling, the old school will tell us there is no poetry in steam; none of those associations which make sailing a pastime so dear to the British heart and such a training school for the young sailors of the country. But this is prejudice; let them go to Cowes during the carnival, and see there some of our latest pleasure steamers with their handsome hulls and cream-coloured funnels, their narrowly planked decks as white as snow, and brass work flashing like fire in the sun; let them see this, and they must surely alter their opinion.

As was the case with our passenger steamers, it was not always so, and as it took many years to produce a 'Campania,' so a 'Nahma' or 'Valiant' is the result of many years' study and experience.

When Lord Brassey built the 'Sunbeam' in 1874, 500 tons was considered a large tonnage for a private yacht; last year several vessels were built with tonnages between 1,500 and 2,000.

Whether this gradual growth will continue it would be hard to say, but in all probability it will not; the expense of keeping a 2,000-ton steamer in commission must tell on even the longest purse, and is out of all proportion to the pleasure derived from her. As a matter of fact, however, few of the larger boats are fitted out for more than a few months at a time.

During recent years there seems to be a growing tendency in favour of full-powered steamers as against auxiliary steam. Auxiliary steam yachts are in too many cases neither one thing nor the other; they require the full crew of the sailing yacht, and are handicapped as such by their screws and funnels; as steamers, they rarely give more than 10 knots, while their top hamper and heavy spars render them uncomfortable sea boats. For all that, the auxiliary has many staunch supporters, and the class includes many of our finest yachts. As an alternative, many yachtsmen include a 'rater' in their outfit, which they can take with them from one regatta to another, and thus satisfy their love of sport and comfort.

The largest private yacht is Mr. W. K. Vanderbilt's 'Valiant' of 2,184 tons, and a between perpendicular length of 307·5 feet. She was built in 1892 by Laird Brothers, from Mr. St. Clare Byrne's designs, and is specially adapted for long cruising, attaining under forced draught a speed of 17 knots, or under ordinary conditions 15. To the builders, who had *carte blanche* as regards expense, the 'Valiant' cost considerably over 100,000*l.*, besides which, very large sums were spent on French upholstery and cabinet work. To keep this boat in full commission for twelve months would take something between 20,000*l.* and 25,000*l.*

In 1892 Mr. Laycock also built his 'Valhalla' (1,490 tons), the largest of our auxiliary yachts. Barque-rigged, after the old Government fashion, with 25,000 square feet of canvas, this ship shows to advantage on a sailing day; while under steam alone, when the weather is not propitious or circumstances do not permit her to set her canvas, she registers a mean speed of 10 knots. The crew of the 'Valhalla' number a hundred all told, and her building price may be put down as being between 65,000*l.* and 70,000*l.*

Following these vessels in their respective classes, slowly at first but more rapidly as we descend in tonnage, comes our pleasure navy—the finest the world has ever seen—representing annually millions of money. To give anything like a description of even a tithe of these yachts would far exceed the limits of an

article like the present, the object of which is rather to deal with the financial side of the question; but to anyone who may wish to dip further into the matter, Lloyd's Yacht Register will give the particulars of every British yacht, be she one ton or a thousand.

Photo, WEST & SON, *Southsea*

'VALHALLA'

The prospective yacht-owner has many things to consider before building—what size of ship he will require, what kind of ship, of what materials she is to be built, and of what speed. The first of these questions will, of course, depend on the accommodation needed, and also the use to which she is to be put. It may be a 1,500-ton steamer, with a crew of sixty, to take a score or more guests round the world; or an 80-ton yacht, with

half a dozen hands, suitable for cruising with three or four persons. It must, of course, be borne in mind that, although one may be quite comfortable for a week or two, with a state-room six feet square, it would not do to go to sea for months at a stretch with accommodation anything like that. This the owner must arrange according to his own ideas and wants, looking carefully into the hundred and one details of arrangement which make a yacht habitable, or, being neglected, uncomfortable. The kind of boat is a matter of taste, and the materials she is built of is in some cases the same. A wood steamer

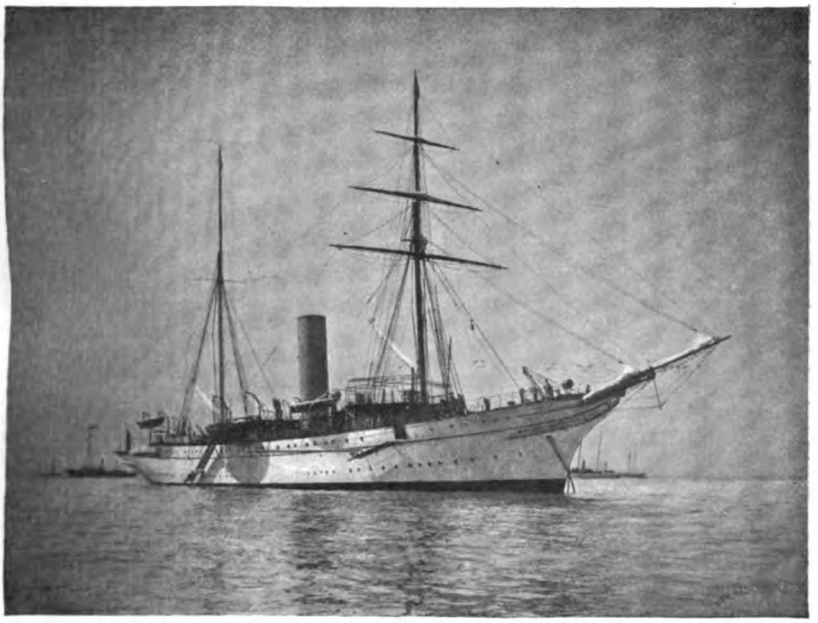
Photo, WEST & SON, *Southsea*

'SUNBEAM'

is seldom now built over 100 tons; the difficulty of procuring the timber, the expense of working it, and the increased facilities for steel building have entirely stopped the construction of large steam yachts of wood. In the composite ship a compromise has been effected. Many fine yachts have been built on this system, and in cases where they are to be permanently abroad, and not within reach of a yard where steel working plant is kept, it is particularly suitable. Vessels like the 'Zaria' (973 tons) have been built of composite materials, and in the case of the 'St. George' (871 tons) not only are the frames and girders of steel, but she is entirely plated, being sheathed with teak planking

five inches thick; this latter is, however, a most expensive system, and in the event of faulty workmanship a dangerous one.

For large steam yachts there is nothing to compare with steel; its great advantages were tested and conclusively proved in the Royal and Merchant Navies many years ago. By the use of steel, yachts have been rendered lighter, thereby giving the naval architect a greater control over the distribution of weight; they are more quickly built, are stronger, and with ordinary care and attention their lives are longer. As regards speed, the merits and demerits of high and low speeds can be more easily explained

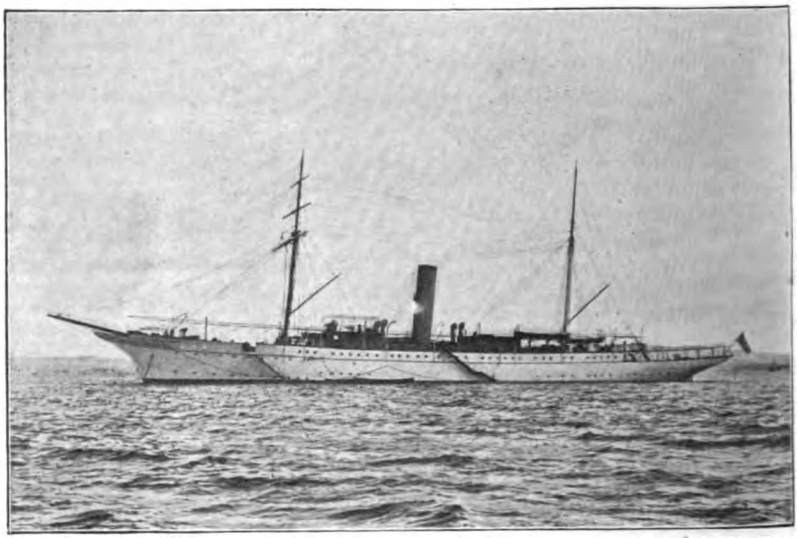


'MAYFLOWER' *Photo*, WEST & SON, *Southsea*

under the question of upkeep, on which, as will be shown later, it has considerable influence.

As it would be impossible here to give prices for all the different types and tonnages of the larger yachts—I have no intention, for the present, of considering the smaller craft—let us take an average size and look into the cost of a 500-ton steamer. Let us say she is to be built of steel to Lloyd's highest class, from designs and specifications, and under the supervision, of a good naval architect, such as Mr. St. Clare Byrne or Mr. Watson; everything to be of the finest yacht material and finish; single,

triple expansion engines of the latest type, with the ordinary marine boiler, and also a complete installation of electric light. The price of this boat, complete in every respect, should not exceed 21,000*l.* or 22,000*l.* This price may fluctuate either way, and will altogether depend on the specification. The labour and material market is also sometimes an unknown quantity, no builder caring to keep a quotation open for a long period. As a rule, however, the price of a first-class yacht about this size should be between 38*l.* and 42*l.* a ton. I might mention, perhaps, before going further, that, unless it is otherwise stated, when tonnage is mentioned in connexion with a yacht it means Thames Measurement



'NAHMA'

Tonnage. A twin screw is, of course, a more expensive boat, inasmuch as it means a double set of engines and shafting. An auxiliary steamer should be very little, if anything, more; as what goes on to sails and gear to a certain extent comes off the engines, unless, however, she requires much ballast, which, if lead, is a considerable item.

Of course, steam yachts are built for much lower prices than the one quoted, and, should the owner desire it, there are many points in which a saving can be effected; yachts of a smaller tonnage—when the price should naturally rise—being built, in most cases with the object of selling, as low in price as 30*l.* a ton.

On the other hand, however, vessels of double the tonnage keep their price over 42*l.*

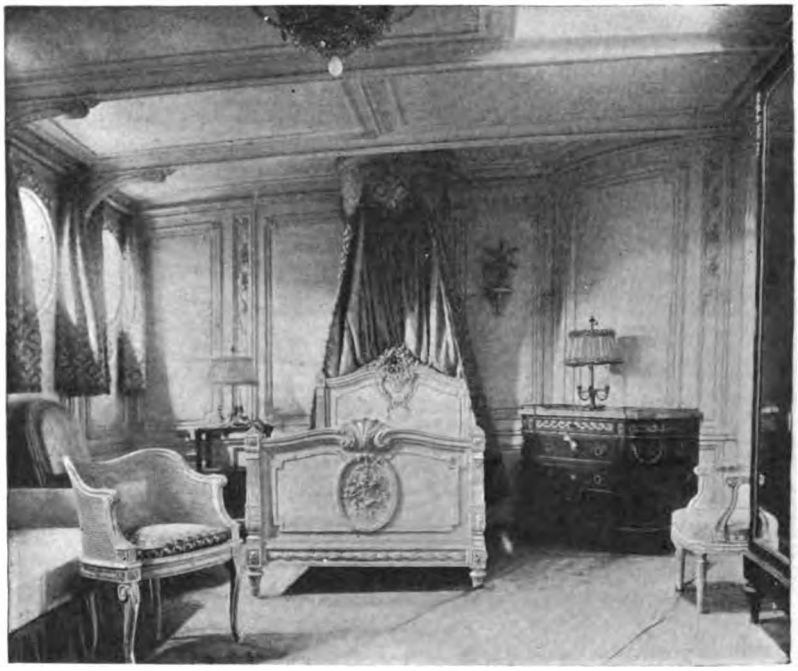
For the building of a first-class boat special plant is necessary, and, the quality of work and material requiring to be superior to the ordinary run of marine work, it is not every builder who can undertake the work. Should an owner then be tempted by a low offer from a builder not accustomed to yacht work, he may very soon have occasion to rue his bargain, as, although he may specify the material, the quality of the work is not a fixed

'NAHMA,' DRAWING-ROOM

standard, and it is the finish which gives a yacht that appearance which distinguishes her from all other vessels. The bulk of the orders for large steam yachts are placed with the Scotch yards, either on the Clyde, where the output for last year alone was over 10,000 tons, or at the famous Leith yard of Messrs. Ramage & Ferguson, where so many of our large yachts have been built.

Having, let us say, satisfactorily disposed of the building question, we come to that of upkeep, technically known as the running expenses. The principal item under this category is, while cruising, coal; and it is here, as I mentioned above, that the

question of speed plays so prominent a part. Let us again take as our example the 500-ton steamer. Say we wish her to realise 13 knots on trial. To attain this speed she would require to indicate about 800 h.p., which, with the ordinary marine boiler and usual conditions, would mean a coal consumption of about 7·5 tons per twelve hours, or, with a water-tube boiler, about 9 tons, which might also represent the consumption for compound engines indicating the same h.p. To realise 14 knots would require 1,000 i.h.p., with a consumption of 10 tons. Thus a

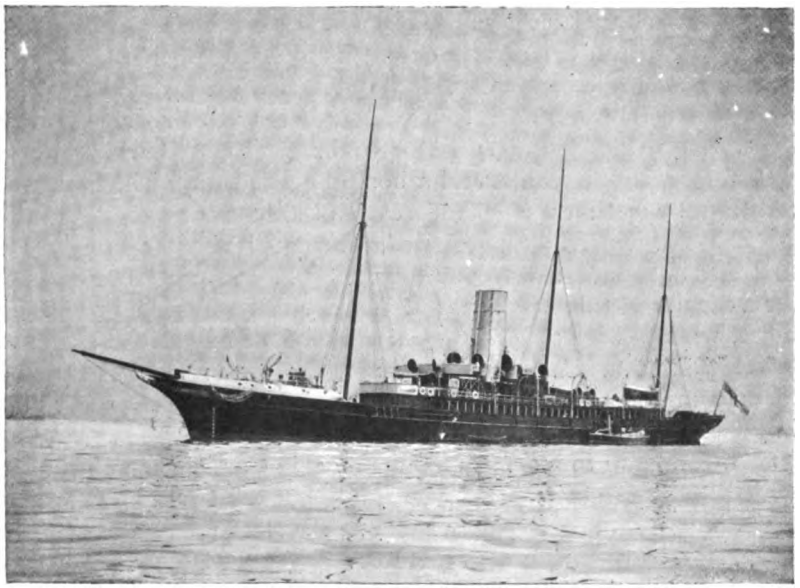


'NAHMA,' PRIVATE STATE ROOM

7·7 per cent. increase of speed entails an increase in coal consumption of 33 per cent., and as higher speeds are attempted, each additional knot becomes more expensive than the last. Were one merely to take into consideration the economy of travelling a certain distance, it would resolve itself into a question of whether it were cheaper to travel that distance at a high speed, with an expensive engine, or more leisurely, with the more economical consumption.

When we bear in mind the fact that yachtsmen desire to sail,

and not to race, from port to port, passing everything they come across, we are not surprised to find that the majority of yachts attain comparatively low speeds, generally between 10 and 11 knots. A notable exception to this rule is the twin screw steamer 'Giralda' (1,664 tons), recently sold by Mr. Harry McCalmont, M.P., to the Spanish Government, which, under forced draught, has a speed of over 20 knots, and i.h.p. of 6,500, meaning probably a consumption of 70 tons per twelve hours. As she has five boilers, with sixteen furnaces, and carries 400 tons of coal, she



'GIRALDA' *Photo*, WEST & SON, *Southsea*

has, apart from the question of consumption, to sacrifice to speed a great portion of her best accommodation.

Cruising then at 11 knots we shall probably burn 6·5 tons in twelve hours, and with best Welsh coal ranging in price from 18*s*. to 21*s*. a ton, the cost of a week's steaming for our 500-ton ship will be roughly 80 to 100*l*., or for a six months' commission, steaming two-thirds of the time, the coal bill will be about 1,600*l*.

Next comes the crew, which in this case will number twenty-five or twenty-six all told, with a weekly pay bill of some 45*l*., being 1,080*l*. for the six months. In British yachts the majority of the crew mess themselves, but in America it is customary for the

owner to provide for all. The outfit for this crew of twenty-six will amount to a little short of 250*l.*, but after the first year this item would not be such a large one.

To estimate the stores and provisions is a very difficult matter, depending altogether on the owner. In order, however, to complete our calculation, we shall say 1,000*l.* to comfortably cover everything in the commissariat department for six months, with a guest party of six or seven.

Add to these items an insurance premium of 250*l.*, an oil and cleaning material bill of 150*l.*, and we have a grand total of 4,330*l.* for the six months. These figures take into account merely those things which can to a certain extent be reckoned with, and do not include any of the innumerable items which are always cropping up in connexion with a steam yacht; items which every owner knows so well. There is water to be paid for, harbour dues, pilots' fees, laundry bills, and a host of other things which seldom fail to put together a most respectable total.

If hired, instead of purchased, the usual charter money for first class boats of 200 to 600 tons is 30*s.* a ton per lunar month for a season of three months; if for a shorter period it will be more, while a long 'let' can generally be arranged for a much lower quotation. In cases of charter, the owner as a rule pays for consumable stores and officers' mess, besides keeping the yacht in proper condition.

To condense to the form of a magazine article a subject on which books might be written, is no light task, and one in which the difficulty of deciding what can be left unsaid constantly recurs. Of necessity much has to be omitted, and points which might interest many yachtsmen cannot be touched upon, however briefly.

NOTES

BY 'RAPIER'

CORRESPONDENTS continue to write and ask me for more of the Notes on racing such as I used to write when I edited the *Illustrated Sporting and Dramatic News*. It is pleasant to know one has gratified readers, and the request is agreeable; but, as I have before explained, there are insuperable difficulties in the way. I am writing more than a fortnight before the Derby; by the time this number of the Magazine is published the great race will be over; what, then, can be written about Epsom, or how can I discuss the Grand Prix, the result of which depends to a great extent on what has taken place on the Downs? As for the Grand Prix, if I only knew as much now as the reader will know when he glances over this page, I should have much to say. During the winter I fully explained why Disraeli was a better horse than his running made him appear, and he vindicated that opinion by his handsome victory in the Two Thousand, causing his name to be written on that scroll of fame, the list of classic winners.

But popularity and reputation are as easily lost as won. I confidently suppose that Disraeli will win the Derby, in which case it is intended to ship him across the Channel to run for the Grand Prix. If one could only foresee! When these Notes appear he may have won the Derby, and seem to have a brilliant chance of following up his success by a triumph at Longchamps; or he may have been so badly beaten that it will appear useless to send him; or, again, he may have met with some accident or mishap and have taken no part in the Epsom contest. Towards the end of last June few things in racing looked more certain

than that Disraeli's stable companion, Angus, would win the July Stakes at Newmarket. He was shut up in his box at night as fit and well as a horse could be; next morning when the stable was opened his chance was gone. Kicking in the night, he had sprained the muscles of his quarter, and that kick made a difference of some 3,000*l.* to his owner; for not only was Angus prevented from running for the July Stakes, but, it being thought useless to leave both him and Disraeli in the Champagne Stakes at Doncaster, the latter was struck out of a race that he could not have lost. Such are the chances of racing!

Since then, as the reader interested in Turf affairs is probably aware, Angus has hurt himself again. He could not well do so by kicking, as his box is thickly padded, but he either struck his knee against the manger or slipped violently on to the floor, the result being an injured knee. It is hard in the extreme to find a really good horse, and when one is found, that he should knock himself about and be unable to show his capacity is cruel luck. Augus, unfortunately, has not that taste for cats which is so beneficial to some horses. A cat rarely acts as a sedative to humanity, indeed, the reverse is usually very much the case; but if a racehorse takes to a cat the little creature has a most soothing effect on him. A former notable occupant of the Disraeli stable, Best Man, was deeply attached to his feline companion, and when, after winning the Prix du Conseil Municipal, he got back from France, she having been lost on the way, for days afterwards he kept gazing round wistfully to see whether she was not coming. Disraeli, too, is a lover of cats, and his friend is so anxious to coil herself up on his back when he has been dressed over and clothed for the night, that she has to be shut up in a hamper till he is ready to receive her. If Angus had developed the same fancy, the record of great races might have been considerably altered; for he would not have kicked about and hurt himself, and in all probability Disraeli would never have run for the Two Thousand. It seems odd that the history of the Turf should be affected by a kitten—by a colt's taste for kittens, that is to say—but so it is!

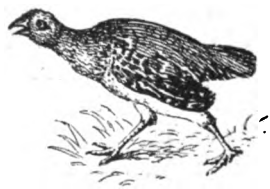
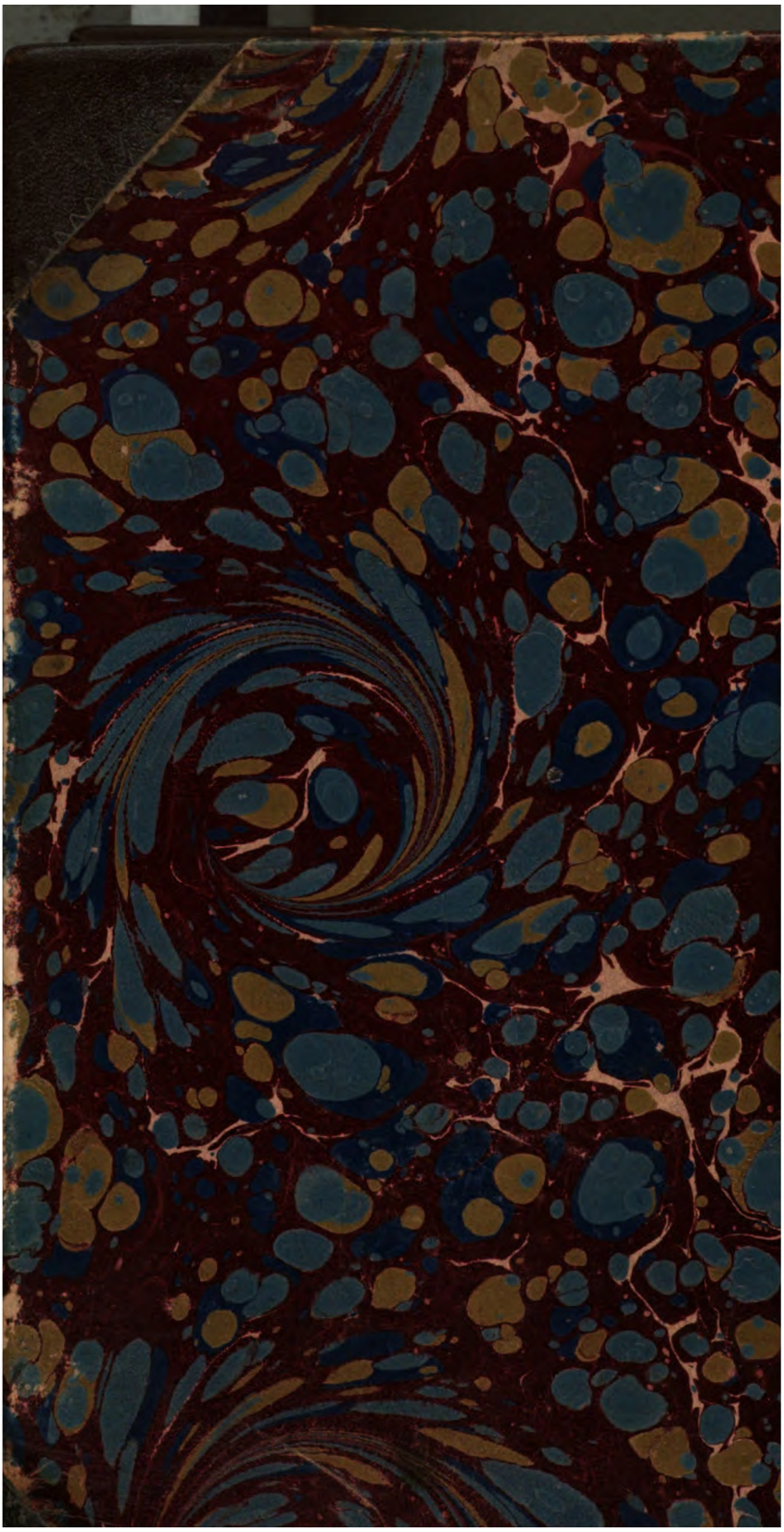
The French three-year-olds are very bad this season, and as no English horse has won the Grand Prix for eleven years—eleven French horses have won consecutively—it is really about time

this rich stake was brought across the Channel. For the first twenty-two years the race was divided with singular equality between English and French owners. Gladiateur ran so often in England that it is hard to say whether he should be reckoned as English or French. Putting him aside, from 1863 to 1886 the Grand Prix was kept at home by Vermout, Fervacques, Glaneur, Sornette, Boiard, Salvator, St. Christophe, Nubienne, Frontin, and Little Duck, ten in all; and it came to this country by the aid of The Ranger, Ceylon, The Earl, Cremorne, Trent, Kisber, Thurio, Robert the Devil, Foxhall, Bruce, Paradox, and Minting —twelve times. Last year it was worth 10,198*l.*—a handsome prize! However, it is too early at the time of writing to do more than say that Disraeli, Ninus, and Dunlop are entered for the coming Grand Prix on the 5th of June.

It is wonderful what accurate eyes for a horse the best 'touts' at Newmarket possess. To the average man horses are very much alike. He may, of course, remember that a bay is not a chestnut, and the few greys in training are not difficult to recollect. Also, if an animal is conspicuously marked, with a great deal of white about his legs, as Hazlehatch had, and most of his offspring have now, that is something to go by; but there are about 1,200 or 1,300 horses in training at Newmarket I believe, many of them are curiously alike, but the majority of the touts know them all at a glance. On the other hand, these men are often altogether at fault in mistaking a brisk exercise gallop for a trial. Not seldom one reads an account of how some horse won half a length, with some others beaten behind, and further speculations as to the probable weights carried, when, in fact, there has been nothing like a trial and the weights of the riders have never been considered by the trainer. A few of the 'provincial' horse-watchers are less accurate than their Newmarket brethren. I know of one case in which an owner who lived abroad took his horses away from a certain stable because his trainer told him one of them could not do any work, and the local tout, who muddled it up with another animal, reported that it went well at exercise day after day, whereas it had never been out of the stable. Why he should have believed the tout rather than the trainer I do not know, except that he had a suspicious mind and little sense. A few trainers, it is reported (and I believe with truth), send up their own accounts of what work horses are doing, and naturally concoct

them without any rigid regard to fact. Thus if they want to back one of their horses for an approaching race, they omit to mention that it is going strong, and the innocent reader fancies it is doing nothing; if, on the other hand, they propose to keep it for a later event, and it is doing little or nothing, its daily progress (on paper) is stated to be quite exceptional. It is backed by the public, runs half-trained, is beaten, and gets into the next handicap with a lenient weight.

Has shooting much improved of late years, I wonder? It is generally supposed to have done so with improved weapons. In a recent discussion on this subject we settled that to kill two out of five birds shot at was very good; but in an old number of the *Sporting Magazine*, a volume dated 1821, I find a much better average. The shoot was at the Earl of Bridgewater's, and here are the figures :—

First day,	7 guns	627 shots	326 killed.
Second day,	9 guns	956 „	511 „
Third day,	8 guns	388 „	261 „

That is altogether 1,098 head of game falling to 1,971 shots—very excellent, indeed! The best shots, it is said, were the Duke of York, the Duke of Wellington, the Marquess of Londonderry, Lord Bridgewater, and Lord Verulam. 'The Duke of Wellington's double-barrelled gun brought down everything before it,' I read.